

# Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 030

FRIDAY JANUARY 30, 2004

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

## INSIDE



### Health Buff

The Tinian Municipal Gym opened its doors to the public during a ribbon cutting ceremony held recently. Tinian Mayor Francisco M. Borja, along with local public officials, was on hand for the official opening of the first government-owned municipal gym.

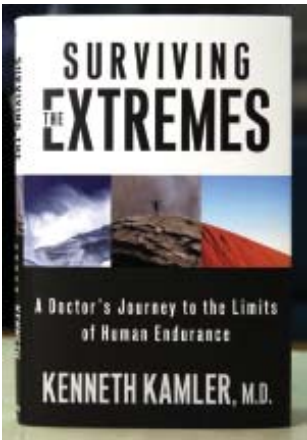
Page 10



### Vision for Biz

Managing an optical shop runs in the blood. Sixty-seven-year-old Crispin B. Cruz has found a new home on Saipan, leading his family in managing a business for nearly a decade now: the C.B. Cruz Optical Shop.

Page 12



### Climbing Everest

He was on Mount Everest in spring 1995, only 1,500 vertical feet from the summit. "I could see the curvature of the earth," Kamler writes of the experience. "I had climbed into outer space."

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### VISITING VOLUNTEERS

EDITH G. ALEJANDRO

Members of the Republic of Korea National Red Cross delegation pose for a photo with NMI Chapter officials following an orientation held yesterday afternoon at the NMI Red Cross office on Airport Road. The group is on island to participate in the Red Cross and Marianas High School cultural exchange programs.

## Is NMI ready for 'sea highway'?

By JOHN RAVELO  
REPORTER

### Biz groups back inter-islands transport system

Public opposition to the shelved Sugar Dock project hinged on the dredging and renovation of the dock, not the introduction of a new ferry service between Saipan and Tinian.

The heads of two major business organizations in the CNMI—the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands—pointed this out, after the Commonwealth Ports Authority withdrew its pending permit

applications for the failed project.

"They do support a sea highway," said Chamber president Alex Sablan. "I think majority of the people would love to see a ferry service within the islands."

Public sentiment just disagreed with the use of the Sugar Dock for the

transportation service, Sablan added.

The Chamber president said this in reaction to a reported statement by CPA executive director Carlos Salas that time would come when the CNMI people would be receptive to the idea of a sea highway.

"It's a given that we'll be accepting

See IS NMI on Page 8

## Audit on bond proceeds urged

By MARIAN A. MARAYA  
REPORTER

Gov. Juan N. Babauta has made known his intent to ask for a comprehensive audit on the Commonwealth Development Authority's management of bond interest

proceeds relating to bond money authorized under Public Law 12-64.

The chief executive disclosed this plan to legislative officers in a veto message that documented his disapproval of House Bill 13-136—a measure proposing to amend PL 12-64 to

appropriate the remaining unappropriated \$2 million under sections 4 and 5 for Rota and Tinian capital improvement projects.

Babauta noted that interest earned on the bond money authorized by public

See AUDIT on Page 8



Babauta

## Drainage upgrade work is underway

By LIBERTY DONES  
REPORTER

Excavation work for the widening and rechanneling of the Garapan drainage system is underway and is expected to be finished in a month.

"If everything runs smoothly, this work can be

completed in four weeks," said environmental and cultural consultant Mike Fleming.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta, who made an onsite inspection of the area at the corner of Dai-Ichi Hotel Wednesday, said the drainage work is a crucial part of the Garapan revitalization project.

See DRAINAGE on Page 8

## CHC gets three additional doctors

By LIBERTY DONES  
REPORTER

The Department of Public Health has hired three additional physicians to address the current shortage in medical personnel at the Commonwealth Health Center.

DPH spokesman John P. Douglas said that Dr. Emily Hernandez, a pediatrician, is the newest addition to the pediatrics department.

See CHC on Page 8



Local

Mayor open to other military activities in Northern Islands

By LIBERTY DONES  
REPORTER

While he is opposed to live-fire exercises on Pagan, Northern Islands Mayor Valentin I. Taisakan said other military activities in the area can be explored.

In a recent letter to Gov. Juan N. Babauta, Taisakan said that he cannot support the use of Pagan Island as a venue for the military’s live-fire training as the island is currently inhabited.

“It [live-fire training] will endanger the lives of residents. As you know, the health, safety, and well-being of the residents are of paramount importance to all of us and cannot be compromised,” said Taisakan.

He said, though, that there are several areas that he wants to discuss with the U.S. military “and they include military training.”

These include the identi-

fication of unexploded ordnances on the islands of Anatahan, Sarigan, Alamagan, Pagan, and Agrigan; the construction of boat ramps or sea-plane ramps on the islands; the construction and renovation of the Pagan airport runway; construction and development of water wells in the areas; construction of trafficable road systems, including road paving, construction of culverts, bridges, other road projects; and construction of permanent plant facilities for water, power, sewer, communications and related infrastructures.

This comes soon after the mayor received an initial assessment by the U.S. military on the potential of Pagan as a combined arms training area. The assessment indicated that Pagan is “suitable and ideal for the various military training exercises.” Taisakan pointed

out, though, that the assessment failed to provide much substantive infrastructure development on the island.

In general, he said, live-fire training is inconsistent with the proposed economic development activities in the Northern Islands such as commercial fishery, eco-tourism, volcanic mineral mining, and specialty agriculture.

The U.S. Navy earlier wanted to hold its military training exercises on Anatahan. When Anatahan erupted in spring 2003, the proposed venue was moved to Pagan.

The Marianas Public Lands Authority had issued the military a permit to hold personnel combat, search, and rescue training on Anatahan for one year. Based on the Navy’s plan, it would use the area as a training ground in searching for a downed aircraft and in rescuing personnel.

Battle of Saipan panel to meet

The Steering Committee for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle for Saipan and Tinian and the Liberation of Guam will have a meeting on Feb. 3, Tuesday, at 3pm, at the Governor’s Conference room.

National Park service liaison and special events coordinator Jessica Jordan urged committee members and all others concerned to inform her or the Lt. Governor’s Office if they will

be able to make it to the meeting.

“I have been working on finishing up the minutes from the Dec. 15 and the Jan. 13 meetings, and I should have them done by Friday afternoon, Jan. 30. I will then e-mail or fax them to you so you may review them preparation for our next meeting,” Jordan told committee members in an e-mail message.

For more information, members can call Jordan at 671-687-1933.

diabetes  
+green

ptc daiichi

uno shop



# Cape Air seeks route in Marianas

A Massachusetts-based airline firm that primarily operates as a regional carrier is seriously contemplating diversifying into the Marianas, with plans of launching flights between Guam, Saipan, and Rota.

According to the Cape Cod Times, the long distance from the Cape to the Marianas chain of islands has not stopped the Hyannis-based carrier from exploring the possibility of setting up shop here.

“Even though it’s far away, it’s very similar to what we’re doing in the Caribbean, Florida and the Cape,” the newspaper quoted Cape Air President Dan Wolf as saying in a recent story.

It said that Wolf had just returned from a “fairly advanced exploratory mission” to the Pacific and Japan, where he met with aviation and tourism officials.

Wolf was quoted in the paper as saying that Cape Air is primarily looking at routes from Guam to Saipan and Rota. Cape Air would serve the islands daily as part of a partnership arrangement with Continental, Wolf said.

The routes are currently being served by Continental Micronesia, Northwest, and Pacific Islands Aviation. Continental is already a Cape Air “code share” partner, meaning customers connect from Continental flights directly to Cape Air planes with a single reservation.

“They would like to see some higher frequency and service in Guam,” Wolf said of Continental.

If Wolf and his team decide to proceed with the venture, Cape Air would reportedly use three 46-passenger turbo-propeller-powered ATR-42 aircraft that it has leased from Continental.

Operations are expected to begin by July and would be staffed by 30 to 40 Cape Air employees.

The Cape Cod Times said that Cape Air is now training its pilots to fly the new aircraft and is seeking the necessary certification from the Federal Aviation Administration. The company would be based on Guam.

Cape Air currently flies nine-passenger Cessna 402 turboprop aircraft.

Part of the reason why the company wants to penetrate the Pacific market is the more than 1 million tourists that descend on the Marianas a year. The Cape Cod Times report said that many of these tourists travel on to the

smaller, more remote islands that the airline hopes to serve.

As for concerns over the potential risks of the new venture, Wolf was reported as dismissive of these. The airline has experience establishing distant beachheads and have done so before in Florida and the Caribbean, he said.

“Once you’re more than a few hundred miles away, for all intents and purposes you need to set it up as a remote operation,” Cape Cod Times quoted him as saying.

He also pointed out the need to diversify Cape Air as Cessna no longer makes 402s. “If we’re going to move forward as an airline, we need to look at what we’re going to use five, 10, 15 years from now,” he said, adding that the carrier would likely use the 46-seaters locally as well.

At the same time, Wolf said the Japanese economy is on the mend. Japan provides 90 percent of the Marianas’ tourists.

Wolf declined to put a dollar figure on the startup costs associated with launching the service in the Pacific.

baby news

cbcruz

mcdo

goldsgym

# Admin. preparing financial presentation

The administration is preparing to report on the CNMI government's finances to members of the 14th Legislature.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta confirmed that the financial briefing, which had been scheduled for yesterday, has been reset for some time next week.

Asked to comment on the highlights of the financial report,

the chief executive said he himself has not reviewed the materials yet.

"There won't be any particular highlight. We just simply want to share the financial information with the Legislature. I would be seeing it the same time [as] they [will]. Just so that everybody is on board and we are all

having the same information on where we are financially. It's just a briefing. I haven't seen the briefing materials myself. So it will be a first time for everybody, including myself," Babauta told reporters yesterday.

In a Jan. 15, 2004 communication to the presiding officers of the 14th Legislature, Babauta indicated that for the last two years, the finances of the Commonwealth government and the relation of these finances to the economy as a whole continue to

be a paramount concern.

"For that reason, I would like to invite you and those members of your leadership who will be the key decision-makers in fiscal matters to a briefing on the present state of the government's finances," Babauta stated in a letter to House Speaker Benigno R. Fitia and Senate President Joaquin G. Adriano.

The Department of Finance would be making the presentation on the government's financial condition, as well the condition of revenues. (MM)

# Japanese firms sued over \$427K fees

A law firm yesterday sued two Japanese corporations in federal court over unpaid professional fees and interest amounting to over \$427,000.

The White, Pierce, Mailman & Nutting is asking the court for the foreclosure of a leasehold interest by JCED Promotion Co. Ltd. and C.D.C Japan, Ltd. over a Saipan land measuring 19,473-sqm, so that the proceeds could be used to satisfy a possible favorable judgment.

The law firm, through Richard W. Pierce, said it reached an agreement in Dec. 1997 regarding fees and expenses to be assessed against the Japanese firms. The law firm apparently represented C.C.C in a lawsuit the Japanese company initiated at the CNMI Superior Court.

To secure the promissory note, JCED granted the law firm a

security interest in a 55-year leasehold over the land, Pierce said.

Pierce said the C.D.C. defaulted on the debt when it made no payment pursuant to the note. He added that the company failed to pay despite demand made by the law firm on Aug. 4, 1998, March 6, 2001 and June 5, 2003.

As of Oct. 1, 2003, Pierce said the principal amount of debt owed by C.D.C. amounted to \$265,434.02. By June 5, 2003, Pierce said interest owed by the C.D.C reached \$162,441.30.

"By the terms of the mortgage, WPMN is entitled to foreclose upon the mortgage, take possession of the premises under lease, and request an order from the court that the leasehold estate be sold at public auction to satisfy the debt, plus costs and expense of collection," the lawyer said. (John Ravelo)

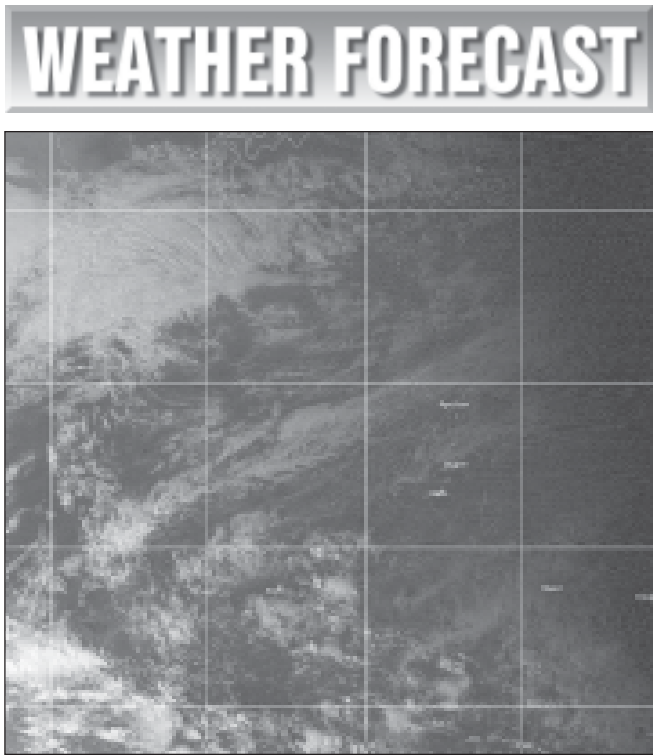
# UPAA meeting on Saturday

The University of the Philippines Alumni Association will have an urgent meeting at 7pm on Saturday, Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>. This will be held at the Filipino Workers Resource Center at the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Nauru building.

All officers and members must attend this very important meeting. The agenda will be: 1.) Final time line of activities for the year; 2.) Committee reports, including fundraising activities to support the UPAA's Education-oriented projects; and 3.) Ideas on how to assist in


recognizing and supporting gifted and talented students.

Registration of new members is still open. The annual membership fee is \$25. For more information, contact the UPAA's public information officer, Haidee Eugenio, 236-1030 or you may call any of the following officers: Marylou Villagomez, 483-9818 or 235-1513 (5:30-7pm); Auralou Sabangan, 286-2547 (9am-5:30pm) and David Quichocho Maratita, 433-4321 cell 287-1012 e-mail dqmaratita@yahoo.com.




PICTURE TIME: 1:00 A.M., JANUARY 29, 2004  
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


Widely scattered showers are located near Yap and Palau between 4n and 11n from 131e to 140e. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found well south of Pohnpei...90 miles either side of a line from eq160e to 3n155e. A cold front stretches from 25n160e to 20n151e and continues as a shear line to 12n130e. Low clouds and widespread rain are found along and up to 200 miles northwest of the boundary.




**SAIPAN AND TINIAN**  
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.  
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 mph.




**GUAM AND ROTA**  
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.  
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 mph.




**PALAU**  
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.  
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.




**POHNPEI**  
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.  
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.




**YAP AND ULITHI**  
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.  
Winds: Northeast 10-15 kt.






















**KOSRAE**  
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.  
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.



**CHUUK**  
Partly cloudy.  
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.



**MAJURO**  
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.  
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Rain	72F (22C)	57F (14C)
 Beijing	Sunny	44F (7C)	25F (-4C)
 Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	64F (18C)	55F (13C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	69F (21C)
 London, England	Partly Cloudy	39F (4C)	33F (1C)
 Los Angeles	Sunny	70F (21C)	50F (10C)
 Manila	Cloudy	83F (28C)	65F (18C)
 Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	67F (19C)	42F (6C)
 Miami	Sunny	72F (22C)	62F (17C)
 New York City	Partly Cloudy	34F (1C)	24F (-4C)
 Osaka	Partly Cloudy	41F (5C)	26F (-3C)
 Paris	Partly Cloudy	31F (-1C)	25F (-4C)
 Pusan	Sunny	46F (8C)	33F (1C)
 Rome	Partly Cloudy	45F (7C)	29F (-2C)
 Salem, Oregon	Rain	56F (13C)	46F (8C)
 San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	58F (14C)	49F (9C)
 Seoul	Sunny	42F (6C)	24F (-4C)
 Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	44F (7C)	37F (3C)
 Washington, DC	Sunny	38F (3C)	25F (-4C)

# SGMA meets with regulatory agencies to work on protecting the environment

By JOHN RAVELO  
REPORTER

“Helping protect the environment is protecting the garment industry’s investments.”

Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association executive director Richard Pierce underscored this Wednesday after meeting with CNMI regulatory agencies to address environmental concerns associated with the industry. The SGMA had asked for the meeting, with Pierce disclosing earlier that the group has taken environmental issues as its “2004 initiative.”

Coastal Resources Management Office director Joaquin D.

Salas expressed full support to the SGMA’s “proactive” move.

Other government offices and regulatory agencies attended the meeting, including the Division of Environmental Quality, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., the Historic Preservation Office, and the departments of Lands and Natural Resources and Commerce.

CNMI Coral Reef Point-of-Contact and CRMO permit manager Becky Cruz Lizama viewed this as a gesture of cooperation. “All of them showed up. It’s a good response.”

With 26 garment factories as members, the SGMA represents one of the major

industries supporting the Commonwealth’s economy.

Pierce said that garment firms would be able to avoid fines if they correct environmental concerns themselves.

“Why should we get the fines,” Pierce said. “It’s only protecting their investments if they try to protect the environment.”

In the long run, garment companies would be able to save money by avoiding fines.

Part of the discussion during the meeting is to allow the agencies’ enforcement officers to inspect garment factories so they could identify environmental concerns that need to be addressed. The factories would

then be given time to correct the concerns for them to fully comply with environmental regulations.

Pierce said he would also invite the agencies to join the SGMA in the Northern Marianas Alliance for Safety and Health, an alliance concerned with safety, health and the environment.

NMASH members currently include the SGMA, Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, Saipan Contractors’ Association, DEQ, Department of Public Works, Northern Marianas College and the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s Region 9.

## SGMA, govt agencies agree to work together on environmental concerns

The Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association and various government agencies have agreed to work together and address various environmental concerns involving the industry.

In a two-hour meeting at the Coastal Resources Management Office, consensus was reached to immediately start regular meetings between SGMA and the various government offices to help each other come up with ways to resolve issues ranging from solid waste management, recycling and hazardous materials, to water quality, air and noise pollution, littering and land management practices.

The meeting was requested by SGMA and was attended by representatives from CRMO, Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Division of Environmental Quality, Historic Preservation Office, the Department of Public Works-Solid Waste Management Division, the Department of Commerce and the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

“The work begins,” said SGMA executive director Richard Pierce.

CRMO director Joaquin Salas expressed optimism the meeting would open the door for more effective ways to address environmental concerns.

“This was really a positive meeting. It brought the private sector and the government together in protecting the environment. We have always been planning to do this,” said Salas.

The federal government has become more involved too.

Patricia N.N. Young, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s program manager for the CNMI and the Republic of Palau, said in a letter to Pierce that her office “would especially be interested in working with [SGMA] in the areas of pollution prevention, recycling, hazardous waste, solid waste and waste water.”

“Let’s do it,” she told Pierce.

Highlights of the meeting included the proposed environmental audit program raised by DEQ that would educate garment factory operators about

the different federal and local environmental laws and regulations that they have to voluntarily comply with.

“I think that’s a good approach,” Pierce said in the meeting.

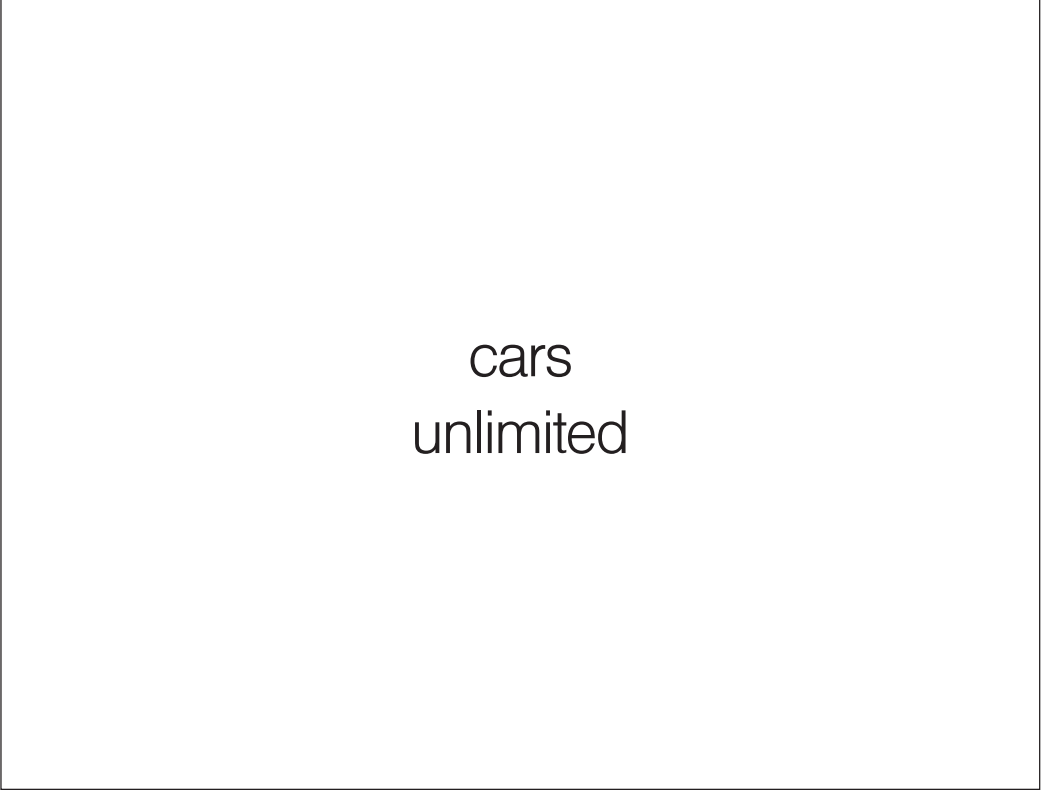
The matter was suggested because experiences had shown that garment manufacturers usually do not have full understanding of these laws and regulations,

resulting to notices of violations and fines, according to DEQ.

As a preliminary step, Pierce and the various government officials present agreed to come up with the different environmental topics that need to be discussed, identify the agency involved and schedule regular presentations on each of them at the factories.

SGMA requested the meeting as part of its 2004 Initiative, which takes environmental concerns to a higher corporate level.

CRMO permit officer Becky C. Lizama said the Initiative is a “good move.” “We look forward to making presentations at the factories and addressing concerns,” she said.





# Opinion

## Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIII, Issue No. 346

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,  
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI  
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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## EDITORIAL

### Gore's Game

**T**here goes Al Gore again. Remaking himself. Remaking the Democratic Party. Remaking America. Or so he says.

The former Democratic nominee for president shook up the 2004 Democratic presidential race by endorsing Howard Dean for the nomination. Gore's blessing gives the former Vermont governor, who has been running as an insurgent, the patina of support from the party establishment. And it solidifies Dean's position as the front-runner for the nomination, as unlikely as that may seem.

Does that mean the race is over? Not so fast! Not when there hasn't been a vote cast yet. There's too much about Dean that isn't known. And it is ridiculously presumptive of the media, us included, to award the nomination before any real Democratic voters have been heard from. Let's wait for Iowa, New Hampshire and then all the big states to weigh in.

Still, Gore's announcement in the city yesterday was a stunner. Insiders say Gore, who models himself a futurist, was taken with Dean's New Age campaign, especially his use of the Internet to connect with young voters. And Gore, the former vice president, agreed with Dean's early opposition to the war in Iraq.

But while Gore's endorsement will help Dean's candidacy gain a certain credibility, Gore is a somewhat tarnished figure who has grown smaller since he lost the contested election to George W. Bush in 2000. One of the things that hurt Gore the most was the sense that he was constantly "remaking" himself, changing from blue suits to brown, from new Democrat to old. There was a sense of unguineness about Gore, which was not necessarily fair but still hurt him politically. Now he's saying the party has to "remake" itself.

What's his game? Some people were upset that Gore didn't even bother to notify his 2000 running mate, Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, that he was endorsing Dean. It's legitimate to ask how Gore could have chosen Lieberman to be the man to run the nation if anything happened to him and now bypass Lieberman for a man with no Washington experience.

Maybe Gore wants to pick up the New Age voting base that Dean has attracted and use it himself for a run in 2008 if Bush is re-elected. Remake or no, it's still all about politics.

Newsday



### Nothing beats a direct flight

**F**or Filipinos—and other members of the community who travel between the Northern Marianas and the Philippines, Continental Airlines' decision to start serving the Saipan-Manila route again is a welcome development. It practically shortens the flying time, thus, making it a stress-free process.

Majority of us have our own personal encounters with a layover—either on Guam or in Seoul, South Korea. And more often than not, it is more straining than fun, no matter how big the airport is or how good the shops are, and how short the layover time is.

I have personal encounters with a layover that is longer than the actual trip itself. I still unfortunately remember strolling around the Guam International Airport for 10 grueling hours when I was once sent to Palau for an assignment. I was literally trapped inside the Guam airport because I didn't have a U.S. visa then to allow me entry into the island-territory.

Just this year, I had to wait 12 backbreaking hours inside South Korea's Incheon International Airport when I attended—together with journalists from all over Asia—a roundtable discussion on migration issues in Bangkok, Thailand.

My Palau and Thailand trips are not what you would say a regular destination among most of us, especially Filipino nonresident workers in the CNMI who mostly touch base once every year. But this year's suspension of the Transit Without Visa program forced a big number of us away from the usual Saipan-Guam-Manila flights offered by Continental Airlines into Asiana Airlines' Saipan-Incheon-Manila service, or Northwest Airlines' Saipan-Japan-Manila route.

There's nothing wrong with stopping over Incheon or Narita on our way to the Philippines but there are also some factors to consider. It's still cheap to take Asiana's Saipan-Incheon-Manila flight but the route practically lengthens the traveling time: 2 hours advance check-in plus 3.5 hours flying time from Saipan to South Korea plus 2 hours layover in Incheon plus about 3 hours flying time from Seoul to Manila equals about 10 exhausting hours of traveling.

Yet still, many travelers put more weight on the extra money they would save by sacrificing a little time strolling around South Korea's gorgeous Incheon airport, with all the fascinating retail shops

By ALDWIN R. FAJARDO

The views expressed are strictly that of the author.  
Fajardo is the editor of the Saipan Tribune.



and food establishments sprawling inside it.

Northwest also offers a very tempting package for Manila-bound travelers but it doesn't seem to suit most Filipino workers' travel desires due to strict visa requirements implemented by the Japanese government. Still, a possible visit to the Tokyo Disneyland is still a major thing to consider.

A direct service between Saipan and Manila is the best solution to Philippine-bound passengers' traveling dilemma. Bottom line is, nothing beats a direct service, especially if the destination is only about three hours away from the point of origin.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

We are now in the process of reviewing the accomplishments of those who have made it to the final list of nominees for the annual Saipan Tribune Person of the Year. The Tribune gives this award each year—now on its fifth year—to recognize the efforts and commitment of those who untiringly and consistently do their part in making the CNMI a better place to live in.

Like last year, we will be naming one Person of the Year for 2003 and nine honorable mentions. Nominees are judged based on the impacts of their contributions or efforts on the lives or overall well-being of the people or the community they intended to serve.

Among those who have been recognized in the last five years were: HIV/AIDS educator Moses Saburo (1999); Ports Authority executive director Carlos Salas and then-board chairman Roman S. Palacios, and then-House Speaker Ben Fitial (2000); David Borja, former principal of Hopwood Junior High School (2001); and Rota Mayor Benjamin T. Manglona for 2002.

Who will it be this year?



## The adult GPA

**W**hether it's the Commonwealth seeking to float \$40 million in bonds, or your brother in law trying to finance a car, it seems like every entity and living being on the planet has got a credit rating and credit score appended to their name.

Oh, yuck, credit scores. Does anyone really want to hear about those?

Well, the good citizens of the Commonwealth should, given that the ghost of the Union Bank of California may be haunting your financial records. UBOC is long gone from our shores, but if you held a UBOC credit card, you may have been subjected to a little surprise. At issue is the fact that UBOC actually transferred some or all (I've been told it was all) of its credit card business to another company.

The transfer actually pre-dated UBOC's exodus from our fair shores, and the two events were entirely unrelated.

If you ever dealt with UBOC, you'll recall that they were a prime bank, a quality outfit. UBOC, is a corporate cousin of the Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi, and the Japanese focus on excellent customer service was certainly a hallmark of UBOC's operations. First Hawaiian Bank, as you know, picked up UBOC's action here and retained many of the excellent staffers, which was good news for the community.

On the less happy end of things, when UBOC slipped its credit card business to another company, things didn't end so well. You have to be very careful who you deal with in the credit card industry, since not all companies are honorable.

As for any former UBOC customers, then, you should review your records carefully. If you have a credit card that has "Union Bank of California" stamped on the front, it may not really be issued by UBOC. Yikes! If you find some unknown company lurking in the background on that one, I'd advise closing the account immediately and taking your business to another place. This is a "consumer alert" from me, and I'll be happy to compile reader feedback on this note, so feel free to e-mail me any experience you may have had along these lines. I have uncovered some disturbing information on the topic and my interest is piqued, big time.

Since I'm on the credit topic, I'll mention that American Express, as well as at least one credit reporting agency, is selling a credit monitoring service. These guys eyeball your credit activity on a daily basis, in order to prevent identity theft or other monkey business from messing with your records. I paid 99 buckaroos to enroll in the service for one year. Cheapskate that I am, I think it's worth dropping a C-note on the deal.

Credit records have become the Grade Point Average of adult life. It's worth keeping an eye on your files.

Meanwhile, I'm gathering the writing files for next year; we've got a lot of ground to cover. The Commonwealth economy will be the hot topic, of course. And—drum roll—yours truly is preparing to launch a new business that you'll be hearing about, which is why I've been in meetings with attorneys this week and have not answered anyone's calls or e-mails. So much for goofing off during the holidays. In fact, I get so worn out planning for 2004 already that I'm wishing that 2003 would last a couple of months longer. I guess that Santa can't deliver more time to even the best of boys and girls.



By ED STEPHENS  
*Ed Stephens, Jr. is an economist and columnist for the Saipan Tribune.*  
"Ed4Saipan@yahoo.com"

## Some soulful memories in papa's bag

**Y**ou had to take off your shoes. No shoes on the gym floor. No sneakers, either. Not if you were going to do the James Brown during a pep rally at my high school. And during those years, from 1966 to 1968, whenever the band broke into, say, "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag," you were going to do the James Brown. You had to.

If Martin Luther King Jr. was telling us to stride toward freedom, Brown was showing us how to glide toward it. And of course, we all wanted to arrive in style.

Unlike the twist or the funky chicken, the James Brown required both frenzy and precision—qualities that represented the tensions of our times as we moved from the regimented life of Old South segregation (my school was Booker T. Washington High in Shreveport, La.) toward a world where you could finally say it loud, "I'm Black and I'm Proud!"

The Kennedy Center Honors that Brown received Sunday brought back those memories.

"We honor one of the most influential musicians of the last 50 years," Kennedy Center Chairman James A. Johnson said of Brown. That would put the onset of Brown's influence pretty close to the start of my life.

Last year, I read a profile of Brown in the New Yorker magazine that led me to the conclusion that given Soul Brother No. 1's troubles with the drug PCP and the police, his struggles with past wives, mistresses, girlfriends and others, along with the fallout from some peculiar political stands, he was lucky to be alive.

"Race, poverty and exclusion were the defining features of James Brown's childhood world, and he might easily have seen himself as cursed," Philip Gourevitch wrote in the New Yorker. "Instead, he seems to have understood himself to be a free agent—denied the comforts of a conventional home, but also spared its constraints—with no choice but to fight for emancipation however he could."

Did that explain Brown's weird behavior—or how he survived in spite of it? Did too much adulation and exaltation lead him to believe that he could do no wrong? A Look magazine article in 1969 declared: "James Brown is a new important leader. His constituency dwarfs Stokely Carmichael's and the late Dr. Martin Luther King's." Did such twisted statements go to his head?

All I know is that during adolescence, I'd break out in a cold

“With each repetition, he invested the monosyllable with a different emotional accent and stress—prayer and pride, impatience and invitation—and although there was ache in his voice, he did not sound like a man pleading so much as commanding what was rightfully his.”

By COURTLAND MILLOY  
The Washington Post



sweat right along with the Godfather of Soul. I never knew why papa needed a brand-new bag, unless it had wine in it; but I knew what to say when I got something new: "I feel good!" or "I got the feeling!"

And the only way to express that feeling was to do the James Brown—to glide on one leg, if you could, with head bobbing and fists pumping, then spin, jump and fall into a 180-degree split, then snap back up—unhurt—and resume your glide.

I also knew how it felt not to get anything at all, especially from a girl. Again, Brown provided words and rhythm suitable to the occasion in what must be the best begging song of all time by a male vocalist, "Please, Please, Please."

I counted the word "please" 25 times—seven times back-to-

back at the start—on a recording that lasts less than three minutes.

Gourevitch dissected Brown's performance: "With each repetition, he invested the monosyllable with a different emotional accent and stress—prayer and pride, impatience and invitation—and although there was ache in his voice, he did not sound like a man pleading so much as commanding what was rightfully his."

This was not a song for doing the James Brown. Our band couldn't play it, and nobody but Brown could sing it. You couldn't whistle or hum it, either. You could, however, put it on a record player to convey your desire for that special someone to stay just a little longer.

Oh, yes. Good God almighty. Honey, please. Don't. Ohhh. Oh, yeah. Lord. I love you so. Pleeceeeeee. Don't go. Pleece-ee-ee-ease. Don't go. Honey, please don't go. Oh. I love you so. Please. Please.

Singer Bonnie Raitt was quoted in the Kennedy Center Honors program as saying about Brown, "You couldn't even list how many people have been influenced by him."

If only she knew how true that was.

## Foreign currencies and CNMI's economy

**H**ow do changes in value of foreign currencies affect the CNMI's economy?

International currencies, which are free floating, trade like commodities in the international financial markets and their values are determined on buying and selling volumes. However, some countries keep the value of their currencies fixed and only change as they deem necessary or due to international pressure. Examples of free floating currencies are Japanese yen and American dollar while Chinese yuan is fixed in value. Exchange rates are expressed as value of one country's currency in terms of another country's currency. For example, current price or value of Japanese Yen in terms of U.S. dollar is around 110 yen per dollar, similar to how we express the price of a commodity, such as 2 pounds of bananas per dollar.

When the value of a given country's currency rises its products become expensive to other countries to buy and vice versa. For example, U.S. dollar value against yen has decreased from about 120 to 110 yen in about a year. It means that the prices of the Japanese products for us have increased and the prices of our products to Japanese have decreased. In our case, the CNMI's products and services are cheaper to Japanese visitors because the fall in the value of dollar in terms of yen has increased their buying power. This is also a very favorable factor to get more visitors or the visitors who come here to spend more. On the other hand for the Japanese investors who have to send back their investment returns to their parent companies, this factor is unfavorable because it has reduced the yen value of their returns. It has also reduced the yen value of salaries of Japanese business managers who work here.

Now, looking at the Philippines' case whose currency has been consistently falling against the dollar, this has an opposite effect to

By DR. MOHAMMAD ASHRAF



that of Japan. As soon as the Philippine peso falls, it implies an automatic rise in the wages of Filipino workers in the CNMI because they get paid in dollars. In this case it would be in the best interest of Filipino workers to keep their savings in dollars and send home only enough to meet the needs of their families. Unlike Filipino workers, Chinese workers don't have incentive to keep their savings here because the value of their currency is fixed by the government. As you may have noticed in the national news media the matter of

fixed value of Chinese Yuan (RMB) is under serious debate between the U.S. and China. The U.S. government thinks the Chinese are keeping the value of their currency artificially low, which makes U.S. products expensive in China and Chinese products cheaper in the US. The logic behind this argument is there is over a \$100 billion trade deficit between the U.S. and

China. The United States is asking China to set higher rate of its currency or expect retaliatory actions.

In conclusion, I would say our government has no influence whatsoever on the value of any currency and we have to learn to live with the consequences of changing values of currencies particularly in our region. I may also add the news reporting of currency rates would be a valuable service to businesses and workers alike.

## Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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# Korean students take part in Saipan-Korea Red Cross Exchange Program

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO  
REPORTER

The NMI Red Cross oriented 48 students and teachers from the Republic of Korea’s National Red Cross yesterday afternoon as part of the Saipan-Korea Red Cross Exchange Program.

NMI Chapter executive director John Hirsch oriented the 37 students and 11 teachers on the mission of the NMI Red

Cross and how the Chapter assists CNMI residents in time of man-made and natural disasters.

Also, Hirsch told the participants about the annual fundraising campaign of the Chapter and its volunteer program.

“Volunteers are called when there is a disaster like the [Sept. 11 incident],” said the executive director.

The P’ Art Music Academy brought the delegation, which is headed by Tae Hwan Lee, to Saipan from the Dae Jeon City, South Korea, according to P’ Art Music Academy program coordinator Park Jun Ho.

He said the group would be staying on the island for five days and would be participating in a series of cultural student exchange programs with the Marianas

High School. The group also visited the Capitol Hill and other historical sites.

The coordinator said this is the first time that Korea and Saipan sponsored the Red Cross Youth Exchange Program. He hopes the visits would continue.

“We want this to continue in years ahead. This is the first time that we brought students here for the Red Cross Exchange Program. They are part of the

Red Cross Youth in Korea,” said Lee in an interview.

After the 5pm orientation yesterday, the group presented Hirsch with gifts and other tokens of appreciations, while the NMI Red Cross handed the students and teachers a Red Cross Kit and informational materials. Also at the orientation were Jerry Facey and other NMI Red Cross personnel and volunteers.

# Crime Stoppers seeks help in 1996 homicide

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO  
REPORTER

The NMI Crime Stoppers is seeking the help of the community in resolving the eight-year-old homicide case that occurred near the Chalan Kanoa cemetery in October 1996.

NMI Crime Stoppers coordinator Sgt. Tom Blas Jr. said the anti-crime organization is asking individuals in the

community who may have information on the death of Feng Zhu Zheng, who was found dead on the roadway near the cemetery.

Records show that Zheng was found across the GZL Hardware and Mini Mart in CK in the wee hours of Oct. 7, 1996. The Department of Public Safety received a call reporting that a person was found on the ground near the roadway behind the Chalan Kanoa cemetery.

Responding officers found the body of an Oriental male, later identified as Zheng. The victim was found on the shoulder of the southbound lane, behind the cemetery and across the GZL Hardware and the Elephant Corp. barracks.

An autopsy conducted showed that Zheng died of blunt trauma to the head.

Additional information gathered by investigators disclosed

that Zheng was last seen leaving his apartment at the Elephant Corp. barracks on the night of Oct. 6, 1996, at about 10:36pm.

He was last seen wearing a pair of white long pants, a white shirt with vertical green stripes and brown shoes. An hour and a half later, he was found dead.

“Investigators are interested in talking to any motorists or pedestrians using the roadway from the former Angel Market

in Susupe south of the Chalan Kanoa Youth Center or Social Hall between the hours of 8pm, Oct. 6, 1996, Sunday, to 12 midnight, Monday, Oct. 7, 1996,” said Blas.

Crime Stoppers is encouraging anyone who may have information about this case to call the Crime Stoppers Tips Line at 234-7272. Crime Stoppers pays up to \$1,000 for information leading to an arrest.

## DRAINAGE

From Page 1

“If we dig this and make this channel bigger, we can get rid of the stinking drainage water that people are complaining about. Right now, the water hardly flows and, naturally, stagnant water stinks. We don’t want that,” said Babauta.

Site engineer Randy Jacob of Maeda Pacific Corp., the winning contractor for the \$4-million mall project in Garapan, said the existing drainage—which measures about six feet—will be widened to a 24-foot open

channel. “It’s still open but it won’t smell because the water will be flowing out,” said Jacob.

The channel, which flushes into the sea, will receive all the wastewater, including storm water from Garapan area.

The drainage project is phase 1 of Maeda’s mall project, which began the work last Jan. 13. Maeda hopes to finish the project by June this year, in time for the 60<sup>th</sup> Battle of Saipan anniversary celebration. The mall project is the third phase of the approximately \$25-million Garapan revitalization project.

The mall or Promenade

project, which covers the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, includes the setting up of a lighting system, drinking fountains, covered shelters and public toilets.

The whole Revitalization Project aims to transform the downtown Garapan into an attractive and safe focal point for tourist and resident activities, including strolling, outdoor dining, outdoor musical entertainment and festivities.

The government said this project would generate at least \$200 million revenue for the government within the four-year period of the revitalization.

Meantime, Fleming, a former director of the Historical Prevention Office, said he is closely monitoring the excavation work to check on any archeological items. In the past, remains of ancient Chamorros had been excavated in the area.

“Remember that ancient people lived in the coastal area because their main livelihood was fishing so it’s likely that you’d find archeological remains on beachfronts,” he said.

He noted, though, that the site of the drainage project had been excavated, back-filled, and developed in the 70’s for a bar grill.

The drainage site used to be the venue of Martin’s Bar and Grill, owned then by Martin Cabrera, now the Coastal Resources Management enforcement chief.

“He [Martin] found some human remains here during that time,” said Fleming.

He said 260 skeletal remains of ancient Chamorros were unearthed from the empty adjacent beachfront area, which was initially developed by Nakamoto Hotel Development.

So far, he said the drainage project site has yielded “recent archeological items” only such as bottles and cans of beers.

## CHC

From Page 1

A husband-and-wife team, Drs. Dan Karl and Rosemarie Maninno, meantime, have joined the internal medicine department.

Douglas said the Maninnos attended medical school at Suny Bufallo in New York and received their residency from the Medical College in Virginia. The couple worked briefly at the Richmond VA Hospital before moving to Saipan. They

inked a short-term, four-month contract with CHC.

“Both have so far liked working at the hospital, and have had positive interaction with patients and staff,” said Douglas.

Hernandez, a pediatric pulmonary specialist from the Philippines, was trained and received her residency from Beth Israel Hospital in Manhattan, New York. She also worked for three years in Philadelphia, and later in Denver. Hernandez signed a one-year contract with CHC.

Hernandez had been to Saipan in 1997, together with her husband, also a doctor, who now works at Saipan Health Clinic.

“I enjoy working with children and their parents. A doctor is like an artist. The work of art that is created is people’s health and well-being. I love my work and find it highly rewarding,” she said.

Last November, the DPH also welcomed five new doctors: Ceasar Cajita, Arunas Urbonas, Bernadette Saccomanno, Jennifer Lo, and Stan Bristow.

The department said that Cajita works in pediatrics, Urbonas specializes in nephrology, Saccomanno is assigned at the emergency room, Lo is a family practice resident, and Bristow works in triage/ER.

Douglas said one of these doctors signed a one-year contract, while the others have only one to four-month contracts.

The hiring of additional physicians came in the wake of increasing complaints about

delayed medical services at CHC. This situation had led to a number of arguments between patients and CHC staff, including a patient’s father who punched a CHC window after being told to return after a long wait.

To relieve the situation, the department earlier called on local residents to visit CHC’s satellite clinics in San Roque and San Antonio first. The department also encouraged residents to see their family physicians or visit private clinics.

## AUDIT

From Page 1

law had already been obligated for various projects.

“Accordingly, there are no funds available under Sections

4 and 5 of Public Law 12-64 to fund 13-136,” the chief executive said in his veto message.

Babauta further told the Legislature that CDA was “less than forthright” in its accounting

of the interest earned on the bond proceeds authorized by Public Law 13-64.

The governor explained that his decision to veto HB 13-136 was a result of careful analysis conducted by the administration

in coordination with the legislative delegations of Rota and Tinian, as well as representatives from CDA and the administrator of Capital Improvement Projects.

HB 13-136 was introduced

by Rep. Jesus T. Attao in the 13th Legislature. Co-authors of the bill included former Rep. Daniel O. Quitugua, Rep. Arnold I. Palacios, former Rep. Francisco DLG. Aldan, and Rep. Norman S. Palacios.

## IS NMI

From Page 1

transportation [within] the islands,” Sablan said.

He clarified that, while the Chamber does not oppose the proposed ferry system using Sugar Dock, the group had to support the people’s sentiment against the proposal. Sablan and former Chamber president Jay Jones appeared at the public hearing about the proposal at the Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center last Dec. 22.

He said the Chamber is saddened with the pullout of the Australia-based Island Transportation Solution, which had wanted to introduce the ferry service using the Sugar Dock. Future investments of this type are welcome at alternative sites such as the Port of Saipan and the Garapan Fishing Base, he said.

HANMI chair Ronald Sablan shared this sentiment, saying the group’s opposition to the CPA’s permit application was the use of the Sugar Dock.

“I don’t think anybody was against the project [ferry service],” Sablan said. “The project itself is good for the CNMI economy, but the question was the use of Sugar Dock.”

The HANMI chair, who also appeared in the Saipan public hearing, expressed concern that dredging the dock might lead to severe erosion on nearby beaches. So far, he said the CNMI could only rely on its beaches for its tourism industry.

After the CPA’s withdrawal of its permit applications, Save Sugar Dock’s Wesley Bogdan also said the ferry service is a “great project” if it would utilize alternative sites other than the Sugar Dock, such as the Port of Saipan.

Earlier, he noted the Division of Environmental Quality’s decision not to issue a water quality certification to the CPA in connection with the project proposal. The Clean Water Act and the CNMI Water Quality Standards require the issuance of the certification before allowing any activity that may result in any discharge into territorial waters.

The DEQ made the determination after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency opposed the project. In part, the EPA had said there has been no systematic sampling made to confirm any contamination on material that would be dredged based on the CPA’s proposal to dredge some 20,000 cubic yards of material. The EPA had also cited the significant seagrass beds and the scattered live coral colonies nearby.



# Governor announces grant recipients

The Hopwood Junior High School community played host yesterday to the ceremony officially announcing the recipients of the performance improvement grant awards for teachers, a part of Gov. Juan N. Babauta’s Education Initiative. Twenty public school

Charlotte DLG. Camacho, Nancy Mengidab of Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School; Grant Title: Leap Pad System worth \$3,448.40

■ Jeanne Samari of Marianas High School; Grant Title: Vocational Ed: Child Development, clothing and home

furnishing worth \$2,500

■ Roxie Frisby Lamar, Oleai Elementary School; Grant Title: Online Professional Development for \$2,500

■ Jennifer M. Villagomez, Gregorio T. Camacho Elem. School; Grant Title: Community of Young Writers for \$2,500

■ Rizalina G. Maratita and Elizabeth Mendiola of Koblerville Elem. School; Grant Title: Picturing Technology Inside and Outside the Classroom for \$4,500

■ Dora Miura of San Antonio Elementary School; Grant Title: Technology in the Classroom for \$1,0850.07

■ Melissa Guinto and Helen Pangelinan of Marianas High School; Grant Title: Second Chance Reading for \$5,000

■ Lota Lamberto, Sarah Serrano, Jasleyne Parico and Tina Tenorio of Oleai Elementary School, Grant Title: Computer/Internet Training for \$10,000

■ Jim Brewer, Christine Halloran, Walter Taitingfong and John Pialur of Hopwood Junior High School; Grant Title: Li’Nala’ Malawasch Academy: Project Second Chance for \$7,500

■ Joy Taimano of Kagman Elementary School; Grant Title: Reading Proficiency for \$2,497.37



Babauta

teachers were named recipients to grants in varying amounts totaling \$42,295.84.

HJHS Interim Principal Jim Brewer and principal/PSS deputy commissioner for administration David Borja welcomed Babauta and guests to the school, commending the administration for initiating the grant programs.

Brewer particularly thanked Babauta for thinking outside the box and coming up with a creative program to better education in the CNMI.

Before announcing the list of winners, Babauta reiterated his bid to secure legislative support in order to continue funding the grant programs after this first year.

He underscored the purpose of the program, which, he said, is to raise the level of academic performance.

The total amount available for the Teacher Performance Improvement Grant program is \$125,000, which will be awarded in two-month intervals.

The 20 recipients announced yesterday represent the first set of four batches that will be receiving the grants.

The awardees were selected from 30 grant proposals by a review panel of five teachers.

In order to be eligible, grants must show a link to improved student academic performance and have a method to evaluate whether improvement has taken place.

Grants that demonstrate creativity and imagination, pushing the bounds of the normal methods being used in the Public School System, get more points.

A fourth factor in the grant selection is whether there is no funding for the proposal through the regular PSS budget allocations to teachers, said the administration.

Grant criteria, guidelines and information can be accessed on the Internet at [www.mariana-islands.gov/mp/ed\\_ini.pdf](http://www.mariana-islands.gov/mp/ed_ini.pdf) or at the Office of the Governor at 664-2200.

The five-member selection committee chose the following as recipients to the 10 Teacher Performance Improvement grants:

■ Lorraine R. Jones,

microl oh yeah  
+red

guangdong

gorman





dial rent



PUBLIC NOTICE  
December 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 2003

# Acute Violations of CNMI Drinking Water Regulations

## Drinking Water Violation: Fecal Coliform-*E. Coli*

### Areas Between North San Vicente and Papago

(SAIPAN, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2003)—Public Water Systems are operated by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation. The public utility is in violation of the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations in the northern most point of San Vicente, exiting to Papago. All residents in the water regions / village(s) listed are immediately advised of an acute water violation that indicates the presence of the bacteria: ***E. Coli***, that is in the family of fecal coliforms.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation collects water samples according to a Monitoring Plan, approved by the CNMI Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Routine water samples were collected on December 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. An independent laboratory, Quality Water, incubated and analyzed the samples. At 3:00 p.m. December 10<sup>th</sup>, the Utility was notified of possible violations and advised to repeat water collection samples from within the distribution system’s Monitoring Plan that are located in a broader scope, called, “upstream” and “downstream” sampling. Technicians can then determine the extent, scope, or size of the contamination, as noted in the chart below.

Quality Water verifies, on December 11<sup>th</sup>, that the CUC distribution system remains in violation in northern San Vicente with the presence of fecal coliforms. The utility is required to notify the public and the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) of the violation of the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations.

#### Health Effects

The presence of **Fecal Coliforms** or ***E. coli*** bacteria is a serious health concern. These bacteria are not generally harmful themselves, but their presence in drinking water is usually associated with animal or human wastes, indicating a problem either with treatment (such as power outages stopping chlorine treatment systems) or problems within the public water transmission pipelines (such as a broken pipe that allows contaminated runoff from homesteads, commercial lots, ranches, and polluted soils to enter into the system). The water may be contaminated with organisms that can cause disease. Short-term health effects may include: diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or possibly jaundice, and associated fatigue. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, and people with severely compromised immune systems. These symptoms, however, are not only associated with drinking water; they may also be caused by a number of other factors, other than the water. To reduce adverse health effects, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets drinking water standards. Under the standards, all drinking water must be free of any ***E. coli*** or Fecal Coliforms.

#### Do You Have A Catchment Tank?

If people collect, store, keep or mix CUC water and rainwater in catchment tanks, or if you store water for several days, we strongly urge customers to first boil water before use. (Bring the water to a rapid boil for about five minutes; OR alternately, household bleach (Clorox<sup>TM</sup> or Purex<sup>TM</sup>) may be added: 5 drops per gallon or 2 teaspoons per/one hundred (100) gallons of water. Mix the bleach and water and let it stand for 30 minutes before using the water. Otherwise, there are no actions or alternatives necessary.

#### Corrective Actions Taken

Chlorine Gas is injected into the water. The gas kills harmful bacteria and is a common treatment method. On Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the Lab crews will again collect repeat samples from the contaminated zone and the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Water Chlorination Teams continue to inject chlorine gas at Treatment Stations. The chlorine is fed into the entire distribution systems—at all 13 Saipan water zones. Water is treated primarily at the reservoirs and tanks; and where no tanks are yet built, the wells are first grouped together for treatment prior to water distribution. CUC operates a total of 132 water wells and three springs. has 42 Treatment Stations that are monitored for compliance under the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations, enforced by the DEQ.

Testing Date(s)	Monitoring Plan Sample Site	Villages & Locations of Violation
December 9-11 <sup>th</sup>	Rita Guerrero Test Site	Between north San Vicente and Papago
December 10 <sup>th</sup> :	Anthony Guerrero Test Site	Same Family Property-north San Vicente

For more information about water operations, customers may contact CUC Water Manager Jess Castro 235-7025; or CUC Special Advisor Pamela A. Mathis at 235-7037. Questions that relate to the CNMI Drinking Water Regulations can be addressed to DEQ, at Joe Kaipat, at 664-8500.

# Fed holds interest rate at 1 percent

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER  
AP ECONOMICS WRITER



The Federal Reserve left a key short-term interest rate at a 45-year low on Wednesday but dropped a promise it had been making since August to keep rates low “for a considerable period.”

The wording change was enough to jolt financial markets, sending stock prices plunging, even though private economists said they believed the Fed still planned on keeping rates unchanged for most of this year.

The Dow Jones industrial average, which had been in positive territory before the Fed’s afternoon announcement, lost more than 100 points in late afternoon trading.

Bond prices dropped as

well, sending interest rates set by the market sharply higher.

Short-term rates tied to Fed actions did not move at all because the Fed left its target for the federal funds rate, the interest that banks charge on overnight loans, unchanged at 1 percent, where it has been since last June. That means commercial banks’ prime rate, the benchmark rate for millions of consumer and business loans, remains unchanged at 4 percent, the lowest rate since 1959.

The adverse market reaction occurred because the Fed dropped the phrase it had included in its last four policy statements - that it believed it low inflation and slack utilization of resources gave it the leeway to keep rates low “for a considerable period.”

Instead, the central bank, still

citing the low inflation and slack resource utilization, said it believed “it can be patient” in deciding to raise interest rates.

While the wording change was subtle, Wall Street worried that by dropping the phrase “for a considerable period,” the central bank is getting closer to beginning a series of rate hikes to make sure the rebounding economy does not trigger inflation.

Still, private economists said the statement as a whole does not indicate the central bank is edging closer to a rate hike.

“The Fed is getting the market ready for tighter monetary policy eventually, but they are not going to raise interest rates any time soon,” said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at Wells Fargo in Minneapolis.

Complicating the issue this year is the presidential election. The central bank usually tries to avoid changing rates too close to the November vote out of concern that it could be seen as trying to favor one party over the other.

For that reason, many economists said they still believe the central bank will stay on hold until after voters go to the polls in November.

“We have a slight change in wording, but I don’t think there will be any change in policy until after the election,” said David Jones, head of DMJ Advisors, an economic consulting firm. “The Fed is not going to act anytime soon to hike interest rates with inflation low and the unemployment rate still high.”

The Fed last raised rates in June 2000, when it hiked the federal funds rate by a half-point

to 6.5 percent, the last in a series of six rate increases the central bank had begun in June 1999.

Those rate hikes did slow economic growth, but they also contributed to a bursting of the stock market bubble in early 2000. The fallout pushed the country into a recession in March 2001, ending a 10-year economic expansion, the longest in U.S. history.

Seeking to combat the growing economic weakness, the Fed started in January 2001 to cut interest rates in a series of moves that picked up momentum after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, making 2002 the most aggressive period of rate cuts since Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan took the top Fed job in 1987.

Most of the rate cuts occurred in 2001, although 2002 saw a half-point cut and a quarter-point cut. That reduction last June pushed the funds rate down to 1 percent, the lowest it has been since Dwight Eisenhower was president.

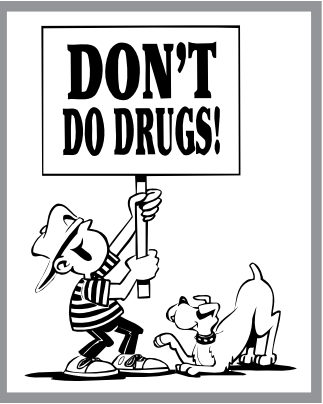
The Fed last June was concerned about the remote possibility that the country’s long period of economic weakness could trigger a destabilizing bout of falling prices, or deflation, something last seen in the United States during the Great Depression.

In its statement Wednesday, the central bank said the upside and downside risks to achieving acceptable economic growth were roughly in balance.

It made no change in this so-called “balance of risk” assessment, although the central bank has appointed a working group of officials who are studying ways to improve the wording of this section of the Fed’s statement. The assessment is designed to signal to markets possible future rate moves, but last year it generated a fair amount of confusion after the central bank split the balance of risks into an economic growth assessment and an assessment of whether inflation or deflation posed the greater threat.

Analysts said the fact that there was no change in the “balance of risks” portion of the statement probably indicated that Fed policy-makers remain split on what improvements need to be made.

marpac







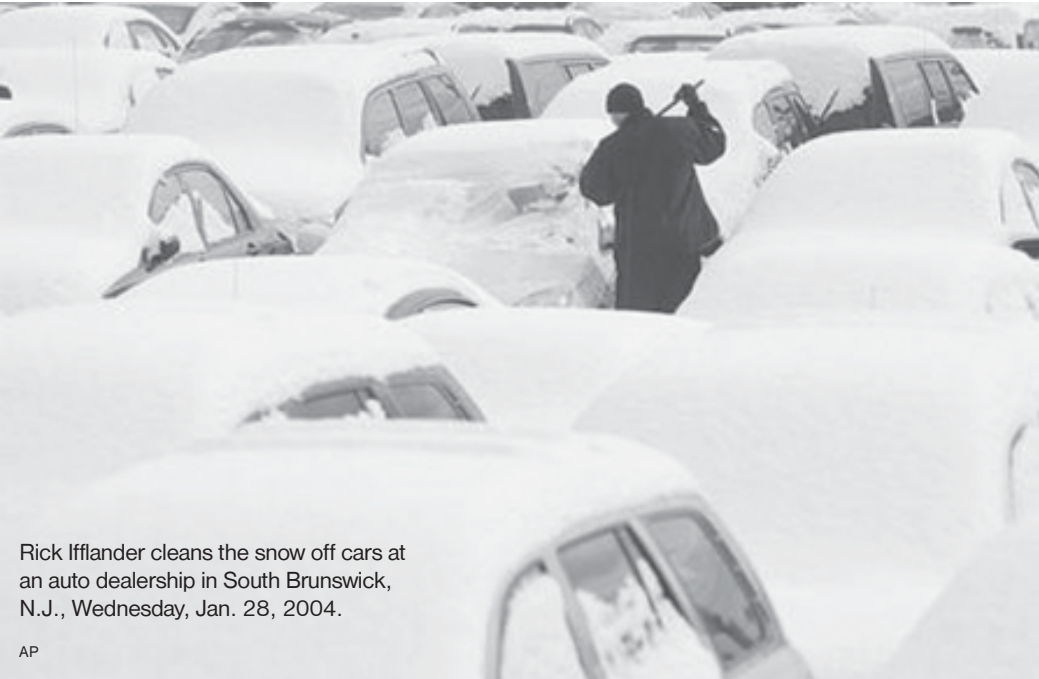








# Nation



Rick Ifflander cleans the snow off cars at an auto dealership in South Brunswick, N.J., Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2004.

AP

## 55 deaths blamed on this week’s weather

By AMY WESTFELDT  
AP WRITER

The United Nations was shut down and more than a million children got the day off from school Wednesday on the heels of a storm that dumped as much as 14 inches of snow in the Northeast.

It was the latest in a series of storms that have spread snow and ice across parts of the eastern half of the nation since the weekend.

Slippery roads have closed schools, businesses and some government offices from the Plains to the East Coast. Thousands of customers still had no electricity in the Southeast because of ice that broke tree limbs and power lines on Tuesday.

“I hate it. I think one storm a year is plenty for me,” said Eunice Flynn, who braved the weather on Long Island to get a few things at a shopping center.

At least 55 deaths have been blamed on snow, ice and cold this week from Kansas to the East Coast.

Diplomats and tourists were surprised when they arrived at United Nations’ headquarters in

New York and found it closed because of the storm.

“I’m going to see the Statue of Liberty,” declared Japanese tourist Midori Uchidate after a U.N. security guard told her that tours were canceled and she couldn’t go inside.

She was about to face a double disappointment: Liberty Island was closed, too.

The storm did not live up to expectations in most of the Northeast. Albany, N.Y., got only 3.4 inches instead of the forecast 13 inches, the National Weather Service said. Rhode Island got only half the 10 inches predicted. But New York’s Central Park got 10.5 and, 30 miles east of the city on Long Island, Dix Hills had 14.6.

“This is pretty unusual for me,” Bill Gillies, 47, a lawyer visiting New York from Melbourne, Australia, said Tuesday night. “But I’m astonished at how people are coping. I’ve never seen this much snow outside a ski resort.”

In South Carolina, lights were back on Wednesday for most of the 300,000 customers who lost power after ice and snow blanketed the state, but thousands might remain without

power until the weekend, utility officials said.

Classes were canceled in many school districts in New England and the Middle Atlantic region, including all schools in New York City, the nation’s largest system with 1.1 million students. And for thousands of Maryland children, it was their third consecutive snow holiday.

It was the fourth snowstorm of the season for New York City. As of midnight Tuesday, Central Park had gotten 32.8 inches of snow since Dec. 1, more than 23 inches above average, meteorologist David Wally said.

Airlines canceled more than 400 flights Wednesday at Newark’s airport, along with more than 300 at La Guardia and about 50 at Kennedy, officials said.

Since the weekend, the weather was blamed for seven deaths in North Carolina; six in South Carolina; five each in Iowa and Missouri; four in Ohio and Maryland; three each in Nebraska, New York, Virginia and Minnesota; two each in Indiana, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Oklahoma; and one each in Georgia, Kansas, New Jersey and West Virginia.

## ‘Air bag switches used improperly’

Pickup drivers are risking children’s lives by choosing not to use a switch that would prevent air bags from deploying in an accident, the government said Wednesday.

A government survey of 3,182 pickup drivers found that those with passengers ages 1 to 12 were leaving air bags on 48 percent of the time. The government recommends that air bags be turned off for front seat passengers 12 and younger to prevent

injuries because the bags deploy with such force. The government also says that, whenever possible, young passengers should be in the back seat.

Drivers with teen and adult passengers said they turned off the air bag switches 17 percent of the time, according to the survey conducted in 2000 by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Seventeen percent of those drivers said they turned off the air bags because they were

afraid of injury and 13 percent said they didn’t like air bags.

The agency found drivers with children in rear-facing child seats turned off the air bags 86 percent of the time, the highest rate of proper usage.

The agency acknowledges that many small adults have been worried about air bags deploying too strongly, but said air bags should cause no harm as long as small adult passengers are wearing seat belts. (AP)

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# Kay blames weak intel in Iraq WMD failure

By KATHERINE PFLEGER  
AP WRITER

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—Former weapons inspector David Kay said Wednesday “we were almost all wrong” about Saddam Hussein’s weapons programs, as Congress pressed a high-stakes struggle to pinpoint why that happened and who was responsible.

Republicans say the nation’s intelligence agencies were the problem. Democrats point to the White House, questioning possible pressure put on intelligence analysts and noting Vice President Dick Cheney’s continued assertions that weapons of mass destruction existed.

Asked at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing if an independent investigation was warranted, Kay replied that he believed an outside inquiry would give Congress and the public more confidence. Democrats are sure to make us of that point as they call for more and broader inquiries.

Kay said he spent six months looking for the former Iraqi president’s banned weapons and has concluded, based on a “sufficiently intense” effort, that they were not there. Kay said inspectors found no stockpiles—large or small.

“We were almost all wrong, and I certainly include myself here,” he said. “My view was that the best evidence I had seen was that Iraq indeed had weapons of mass destruction.”

Kay blamed a lack of human intelligence inside Iraq and inadequate money for U.S. intelligence agencies. He also said he believes analysts have been asked to read too much into limited data.

And, he said, the U.S. intelligence community had become “almost addicted” to information coming from United Nations weapons inspectors during the 1990s, leaving them in trouble when those inspectors had to leave.

Since he resigned Friday as the top weapons hunter in Iraq, Kay’s public statements have sparked widespread questioning in



AP  
Former top U. S. weapons inspector in Iraq David Kay testifies before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Capitol Hill Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2004, that “We were almost all wrong” in intelligence estimates of Iraq’s weapons programs.

Washington about the reliability of U.S. intelligence data and the Bush administration’s main justification for war: to remove an imminent threat posed by Saddam and his supposed weapons.

President Bush has vigorously defended his decision to go to war and expressed confidence in the intelligence agencies. But on Tuesday, Bush shied away from previous assertions that weapons would eventually be found. “There is no doubt in my mind that Saddam Hussein was a gathering threat to America and others,” Bush said.

The White House on Wednesday dismissed the notion of an independent investigation into intelligence failures.

While many congressional Republicans maintain the world is better off without Saddam—whether or not banned weapons are found—some are beginning to doubt the reliability of U.S. intelligence gathering.

Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., a

member of the intelligence committee, said “there’s no question” that information was inaccurate. “We are trying to evaluate why,” he said after a morning briefing from Kay.

A testy Senate Intelligence Chairman Pat Roberts, R-Kan., hoping to fend off widespread calls for investigations, said his committee is in the midst of an inquiry, and members will receive a draft report next week.

“I personally take some umbrage at people who for one reason or another think we need an outside investigation before our inquiry is even complete,” he said.

Roberts contends the problem was with intelligence agencies, not policy-makers at the White House.

But West Virginia Sen. Jay Rockefeller, the intelligence committee’s top Democrat, said the congressional inquiry doesn’t do enough to examine whether the collection of intelligence was manipulated by

Bush administration officials.

Kay said he doesn’t think members of the administration pressured analysts to shape evidence to make the case for war. “I deeply think that is the wrong explanation,” Kay said, adding that numerous analysts had come to him in recent months to apologize about incorrect estimates.

Democrats are using many of the administration’s past statements on the Iraqi weapons program to criticize the decision to wage a pre-emptive war. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., quoted from more than a half dozen statements from Bush and his Cabinet members asserting the existence of Saddam’s weapons programs.

“When lives are at stake and our military is going to be placed in harm’s way ... it is totally unacceptable to have intelligence that is this far off, or to exaggerate or shape intelligence for any purpose by anybody,” Levin said.

church chix

## FBI recalls head of Detroit field office

**DETROIT (AP)**—The FBI agent in charge of the Detroit field office has been temporarily recalled to headquarters amid an internal investigation into a terrorism-related case and the handling of a confidential informant, officials said Wednesday.

Willie Hulon was replaced for the time being by Michael Wolf, who has headed the FBI office in New Haven, Conn., said two federal law enforcement officials, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The FBI declined to comment on the investigation, but issued a

statement Wednesday saying that “any time an allegation is received it is investigated by the FBI and/or the Department of Justice to determine if there is any basis to it.”

The investigation centers on the Detroit office’s handling of the Jan. 20 arrests of Ali Abdul-Karim Farhat and Hassan Farhat, brothers charged with drug trafficking and with giving financial support to the Hezbollah terrorist group, the law enforcement sources said.

In addition, the officials said the internal probe is concerned with a letter written by informant

Marwan Farhat contending that an FBI agent told him to break the law by stealing mail from people the government identified as terror suspects. Marwan Farhat is not related to the two brothers.

One federal law enforcement official confirmed the contents of the letter, which was first reported this week by The Detroit News.

The investigation is being conducted by the FBI’s Office of Professional Responsibility and the inspector general of the Justice Department.

Marwan Farhat also figures

in a Justice Department probe of Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard Convertino, the lead prosecutor in a major post-Sept. 11 case that ended in two terrorism convictions. A federal judge is deciding whether to grant a new trial in that case because Convertino and his co-counsel failed to turn over evidence that might have helped the defense.

After Marwan Farhat, a defendant in a drug case, became a confidential informant, Convertino recommended that he get a lesser prison sentence than federal guidelines recommend.



# Young inmates in Calif. being caged, drugged

By DON THOMPSON  
AP WRITER

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** (AP)—Young California inmates are often locked in cages as punishment, and those with mental problems are frequently drugged and improperly cared for, a state-funded study says.

The California Youth Authority is supposed to rehabilitate its 4,600 young wards, but instead often focuses on punishment such as isolating offenders in wire cages, two experts said in a confidential report obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press.

Inadequately trained therapists frequently treated youths suffering mental illness and substance abuse problems with prescription drugs instead of providing proper therapy. A majority of the wards suffer mental or drug-abuse problems.

State officials are not disputing the findings, and Youth

and Adult Correctional Agency spokesman Tip Kindel said Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s administration inherited the problems but is trying to fix them “on a fast track.”

“The vast majority of youths who have mental health needs are made worse instead of improved by the correctional environment,” reported University of Washington child psychologist Eric Trupin and forensic psychiatrist Raymond Patterson of Washington, D.C.

Drugs are frequently administered to restrain misbehaving youths who are of no apparent danger to themselves or others, while, “In a number of facilities, psychiatric evaluations are cursory and do not meet accepted professional standards,” the report said.

Widespread use of so-called “chemical restraints” is intolerable, said Sen. Gloria Romero, who chairs a

corrections oversight committee.

“This is not the 1930s. Even in mental hospitals, I thought we’d gotten rid of these practices long ago,” she said.

The state-funded report is the first of six being conducted as part of a class-action lawsuit by the San Francisco-based nonprofit Prison Law Office alleging poor conditions and treatment at the state’s 11 youth institutions, which handle young people up to age 25.

The experts said there’s been some progress, but cited wide variations among the nine institutions they reviewed.

The report’s release comes a week after two teenage boys hanged themselves at the Preston Youth Correctional Facility in Ione, east of Sacramento.

“We have got a serious problem, and before another teenager commits suicide the California Youth Authority has got to get its act together,” Romero said.

## Fla. woman breathes after declared dead

**DAYTONA BEACH, Fla.** (AP)—Nearly an hour and a half after rescuers declared an 88-year-old woman dead inside a burning car, investigators at the scene realized she was still breathing.

Now, officials are reviewing the Wednesday morning incident, trying to figure out what went wrong in determining the condition of Barbara Clark, who died later that day.

Clark and her 87-year-old husband, John Clark, were found beside the road in their burning 1994 Volvo 850 about 4:20 a.m.

Firefighters put out the blaze and tried to rescue the couple but found no vital signs, Lt. John King said. They declared the couple dead about 4:40 a.m.

According to the police report, firefighters secured the car and waited for investigators to arrive.

Volusia County spokesman Dave Byron said a Medical Examiner’s Office employee and crime-scene investigators noticed Barbara Clark was still breathing about 6 a.m. Rescuers began first aid and called an ambulance, but she died about 12 minutes later.

Whether Clark could have been saved if someone had noticed earlier that she was still alive is one of many questions investigators hope to answer.

“All of the decisions that were made at the scene—what went into treatment at the scene—will be part of the review,” Byron told the Orlando Sentinel for Thursday’s editions.

## Driver found dead in Colo. may be suspect

**JOHNSTON, Iowa** (AP)—Authorities believe a motorist who killed himself Wednesday after a short pursuit on a Colorado highway is a 16-year-old they had been searching for since a house sitter and a social worker were found shot to death at his Iowa home.

The body was not immediately identified, but Mesa County Sheriff’s spokeswoman Wendy Likes said “everything per our investigation leads us to believe” it is that of Tyler Pirtle.

Police began searching for Pirtle on Tuesday after the bodies of Sarah Dahlke, 21, of Marshalltown, and Greg Gaul, 41, of Des Moines, were found at the home in Johnston, an affluent Des Moines suburb.

Dahlke was watching Pirtle, the house and pets for the house’s owners, Pirtle’s father, Matthew Pirtle, and Sarah Collinson, who were in the Cayman Islands at the time of the shootings.

Gaul was a social worker and a father of six. Police did not say

why he was at the house, but a spokesman for Gaul’s family said the Pirtles were among his clients and he had received a “strange call” to go to the house that morning.

Police did not reveal a possible motive.

After authorities launched a nationwide search, a car matching the description of the red 1995 Mercury Mystique that Pirtle was believed to have been driving was found along Interstate 70 in western Colorado, 900 miles away, Johnston Police Chief Bruce Gaddis said.

A sheriff’s deputy saw the car speeding on I-70 near Grand Junction, but lost track of the car as it neared the Utah border, authorities said. Minutes later the deputy saw the car heading back the opposite direction and followed it.

The driver pulled the car 50 feet off the side of the road. The deputy ran the license plates and realized the driver could be dangerous, Likes said.

## 10-month-old girl drowns in toilet

**LONDON, Ky.** (AP)—A 10-month-old girl drowned after falling into a toilet in her family’s home, police said.

Brianna Morgan, who had just begun learning to crawl and walk, got into the bathroom, then pulled herself on top of her mother’s jewelry box which was on the floor, police said. She apparently leaned over and fell headfirst into the toilet, which held 6

inches of water.

Brianna’s 10-year-old brother discovered her and pulled her out of the toilet as another brother dialed 911, WLEX-TV reported. Their mother, who had been in the basement, tried CPR but couldn’t revive her daughter.

Police said Brianna, who was a twin, might have been in the water as long as three minutes.

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# Inmate confesses just before execution

By MICHAEL GRACZYK  
AP WRITER

**HUNTSVILLE, Texas (AP)**—A death row inmate confessed to more than a dozen killings just before he was executed Wednesday night for the slaying of a grocery store owner in 1993.

After he was strapped to the death chamber gurney, Billy Frank Vickers, 58, admitted for the first time that he shot Phillip Kinslow during a botched robbery in 1993. He was being

executed for that crime.

“It was nothing personal, I was just trying to make a living,” Vickers said.

Vickers also took responsibility for more than a dozen other killings. He said there were “several more that I had done or that I had been a part of, and I’m sorry but I am not sure how many. There must be a dozen or 14, I believe, all total.”

He mentioned no names, except in the case of a former Texas oil millionaire who was

accused and later acquitted of killing his stepdaughter in 1976.

“One I would like to clear up is Cullen Davis—where he was charged with shooting his wife,” Vickers said, without elaborating or taking clear responsibility for the slaying.

Cullen Davis was accused of killing his second wife’s 12-year-old daughter at his Fort Worth mansion. Priscilla Davis, his second wife, was wounded and her boyfriend was killed. Cullen Davis was later acquitted of murder-for-

hire charges in a separate case.

Jack Strickland, a former prosecutor who worked on the Davis case, said Wednesday night that he had never heard of Vickers and doubted that he was involved in the shooting.

“For some perverse reason known only to him (Vickers), he once again screwed with the system. I certainly don’t put any stock in it, not the slightest bit,” Strickland said.



Vickers

Vickers also referred to an inmate serving a life term for a murder, but said the inmate’s father was responsible for the crime. “I did not do it, but I was with his daddy when it was done,” he said.

Vickers also expressed remorse.

“I wish to say to my family, I’m sorry for all the grief I’ve put you through,” he said.

He died at 6:21 p.m., six minutes after lethal dose began. It was his second visit to the death house in about seven weeks.

Vickers’ execution was postponed last month while courts considered an appeal challenging the constitutionality of the lethal drug combination used in executions.

A final appeal failed Wednesday, with the Supreme Court ruling about 30 minutes before Vickers was taken to the death house.

## Gay men lose challenge to adoption ban

**MIAMI (AP)**—Four gay men lost a federal challenge Wednesday to the only blanket state law banning homosexuals from adopting children, a statute passed at the height of Anita Bryant’s anti-homosexual campaign.

The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against the men, who are foster parents seeking to adopt children in their care despite the 1977 law.

“Obviously we’re crushed,” said Paul Cates with the American Civil Liberties Union’s Lesbian and Gay Rights Project.

Gov Jeb Bush said he was “pleased” by the ruling. It validates Florida’s contention “that it is in the best interest of adoptive children, many of

whom come from troubled and unstable backgrounds, to be placed in a home anchored both by a father and a mother,” he said in a statement.

Florida is the only state in the nation with a complete ban on adoption by gays, whether married or single. The law linked to the movement led by Bryant has withstood several challenges in state court.

Florida argued the state has a right to legislate its “moral disapproval of homosexuality” and its belief that children need a married parent for healthy development.

“We exercise great caution when asked to take sides in an ongoing public policy debate,” Judge Stanley Birch wrote in the

unanimous decision by the three-judge panel. “Any argument that the Florida Legislature was misguided in its decision is one of legislative policy, not constitutional law.”

Mathew Staver, president of Liberty Counsel, a conservative civil liberties legal group, hailed the decision. “In this age of judicial activism, it is refreshing to see a court assume its proper role and allow the people to set family policy,” he said.

An after-hours call to the attorney who argued the state’s case was not immediately returned.

The decision comes as states react to court rulings favoring gay marriage and a Supreme Court decision in June striking down laws criminalizing gay sex.

## Court keeps Guantanamo suspects isolated

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—The Supreme Court stepped in Wednesday to temporarily continue the isolation of terrorism suspects at the Navy base in Cuba.

Justice Sandra Day O’Connor granted a request from the Bush administration to stop a lower court from communicating with a detainee at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals had planned to notify the detainee of that court’s ruling in December that Guantanamo prisoners should be allowed to see lawyers and have access to courts.

O’Connor granted the government’s request to put that ruling on hold, but she said

the high court could reconsider after it hears from lawyers for the detainee, Falen Gherebi.

O’Connor has jurisdiction over appeals from the San Francisco-based 9th Circuit.

Solicitor General Theodore Olson had asked the high court earlier Wednesday to block any developments in a class-action case over treatment of the Guantanamo detainees until the Supreme Court decides this year, in a separate case, whether Guantanamo detainees may contest their captivity in American courts.

The government has been holding about 650 men, mostly Muslims, essentially incommunicado at the prison in Cuba.

The military maintains that because the men were picked up

overseas on suspicion of terrorism, they may be detained indefinitely without charges or trial.

The Supreme Court announced in November that it would consider appeals on behalf of Guantanamo inmates. A month later, a panel of the 9th Circuit issued the ruling in favor of Gherebi, a Libyan captured in Afghanistan.

National security is at stake, Olson argued in an emergency filing, because communication with the prisoner would “interfere with the military’s efforts to obtain intelligence from Gherebi and other Guantanamo detainees related to the ongoing war against terrorism.”

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# Asia







Malaysia extends al-Qaida suspect’s term

Philippine military detains six officers

**KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia** (AP)—Malaysia has extended for two more years the imprisonment of a terror suspect linked to al-Qaida’s attempts to produce chemical and biological weapons, saying he has more information about terrorist operations.

Yazid Sufaat, a U.S.-trained biochemist and former Malaysian army captain, was arrested in late 2001 as he returned home from Afghanistan, where officials say he was working on a biological and chemical weapons program for al-Qaida that was ended by the U.S.-led war.

Since then, he has been held without trial under Malaysia’s Internal Security Act on accusations of being a member of Jemaah Islamiyah, an al-Qaida ally in Southeast Asia.

Yazid, 40, has been described as a key aide of Riduan Isamuddin, better known as Hambali, an Indonesian who was operational chief of Jemaah Islamiyah and a high-ranking al-Qaida leader.

Hambali was arrested in Thailand last August and is in U.S. custody. He is believed to have given up information on al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiyah plots and personnel.

Malaysian officials have said Yazid has only selectively cooperated in responding to questions, but knows more about the chemical and biological weapons program than Hambali.

A senior Malaysian official said Yazid could verify information provided by Hambali. The official spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The Security Act allows for indefinite detention without trial, in two-year stints authorized by government orders. Yazid’s first two-year detention order had been due to expire Friday.

Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is also home minister in charge of security, signed a new detention order effective Friday.

Yazid is the most high-profile terrorist suspect among about 70 detained in Malaysia.

FBI agents interrogated Yazid in November 2002, but failed to get much information. Malaysian authorities have indicated they would consider an FBI request to interview him again, but have ruled out extradition.

Security officials have told AP that Yazid described the chemical and biological weapons program he and Hambali were building for al-Qaida as being in the “conceptual stages” when their plans were interrupted by the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States.

Yazid graduated from California State University-Sacramento in 1987 with a biochemistry degree. He returned home and joined the army, reaching captain.

After leaving the military and starting a computer business, Yazid began attending religious classes run by Hambali, and was recruited into his budding terror network.

Yazid is accused of allowing Hambali and other top al-Qaida operatives—including two eventual Sept. 11 hijackers—to use an apartment he owned for meetings in Malaysia in January 2000. He also is accused of giving a false letter of employment to Sept. 11 suspect Zacarias Moussaoui that helped him enter the United States.

Jemaah Islamiyah is blamed for the October 2002 nightclub bombings on the Indonesian island of Bali that killed 202 people and a hotel bombing in Jakarta last August that killed 12 people.

By JIM GOMEZ  
AP WRITER

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—The Philippine military said Wednesday it detained six junior officers on suspicion of making inflammatory political statements, after a TV network aired video of five soldiers apparently calling for the resignation of the defense secretary.

The military denied there was any political unrest.

Private TV channel GMA Network on Wednesday broadcast the tape of five men in army fatigues saying they were “forced by fateful

developments to cross the line of protocol” to denounce “the shameful and dangerous politicization” of the military.

They called for Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita to resign, claiming he was leading President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo’s campaign for the May 10 presidential elections.

The soldiers’ faces were hidden behind a Philippine flag and they refused to give their names.

But chief of staff Gen. Narciso Abaya said the military had discovered their identities and detained six junior officers for questioning. The military

has launched an investigation, he said.

It wasn’t clear if any of the six soldiers arrested were among the five men who appeared on TV.

The soldiers could be charged for “conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman” if it is proven that they were behind the statement, Abaya said.

“We also know who are the people behind them and it’s very sad to note that this group of officers allowed themselves to be used by some unscrupulous groups. ... We will make sure that they will be accountable for their actions,” he said.

Abaya denied there was unrest

in the military and reiterated his order to commanders to remain politically neutral.

The defense minister denied he has any role in Arroyo’s campaign and rejected accusations he has ordered soldiers to spy on Arroyo’s major rivals.

The Philippines has struggled with military unrest in recent years. In July, Arroyo’s government suppressed a mutiny by junior officers who alleged the military was corrupt.

The military played a major role in ousting both the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and former President Joseph Estrada in 2001.

TRIATHLON  
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Violence closes Thai schools, temples

**BANGKOK, Thailand** (AP)—More than 1,000 schools closed and some monks evacuated their temples as tensions between Buddhists and Muslims in southern Thailand heightened, officials and media reports said Wednesday.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said local leaders from the Muslim-dominated south told him some groups behind the violence received foreign funds. He did not elaborate.

Public schools will remain closed this week while government officials discuss security measures for teachers, who are receiving death threats.

The recent violence

includes the killings of three Buddhist monks by young men with machetes and the fatal shootings of three policemen.

Attacks have increased in Narathiwat, Pattani and Yala provinces since the Jan. 4 torching of 20 schools and raid on a military armory that left four soldiers dead. The government blames militant Muslim separatists possibly linked to al-Qaida and other terror groups.

The Nation newspaper said some Buddhist monks in Narathiwat evacuated their temples for safer places outside the region.

Thailand is predominantly Buddhist except for its southernmost provinces, which are mostly Muslim.

# China’s Hu signs major deals with French

By JOHN LEICESTER  
AP WRITER

**PARIS** (AP)—A market hungry for investment. Millions of people to transport. Power needs to supply. Having scored wins on Taiwan and ties with Europe, China’s president attended to business on Wednesday, luring heavyweight French firms with enticing visions of his nation’s surging economy.

Wrapping up his three-day visit, Hu Jintao was to preside over the signing of nine business and research deals Wednesday, covering electronics, nuclear power, car manufacturing and other industries, French Prime

Minster Jean-Pierre Raffarin’s office said.

The Chinese president first hosted a “Who’s Who” of major French business leaders at his Paris hotel Wednesday morning. He outlined China’s economic needs, the opening of its markets as a relatively new member of the World Trade Organization, and its desire for foreign investment and technology, participants said.

Doing business in China “has become a reality for many of us instead of just the long-term ambition that it was still a few years ago,” said Henri Proglio, chairman of French utilities group Veolia. Last month, it

signed a contract worth \$10.7 billion over 50 years to manage water supply and treatment in the Chinese city of Shenzhen.

France feels its economic ties with China have not kept pace with the political friendship between the two nations, but French officials hope Hu’s visit will help change that. Hu leaves Thursday after a brief visit to European aircraft maker Airbus.

Hu won strong support from French President Jacques Chirac for the ending of a European arms embargo imposed on China after it crushed democracy demonstrations 15 years ago. Chirac also took China’s side against Taiwan, sternly warning

the island against its referendum plans for March. Beijing claims Taiwan as part of its territory and opposes the vote.

While Hu thanked France for its support, Taiwan’s government expressed “strong displeasure” Wednesday.

The 14 companies that sent their top brass to shake hands with Hu and listen to his sales pitch Wednesday ranged from oil giant Total to engineering and telecommunications companies Alstom and Alcatel, as well as defense and aerospace companies Thales and EADS and hotel operator Accor.

Deals to be signed Wednesday included a \$758



Chinese President Hu Jintao listens to speeches during a visit at the Paris townhall Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2004. Former mayor Jean Tiberi is visible at right.

million investment accord between car maker PSA Peugeot Citroen and its Chinese partner Dongfeng to double production at their plant in Wuhan, central China, a spokesman for the French company said.

French glass maker Saint-Gobain, meanwhile, was to sign a deal with China’s Luo-yang Float Glass Group, and electronics companies Thomson of France and China’s TCL International were to finalize a previously announced joint venture.

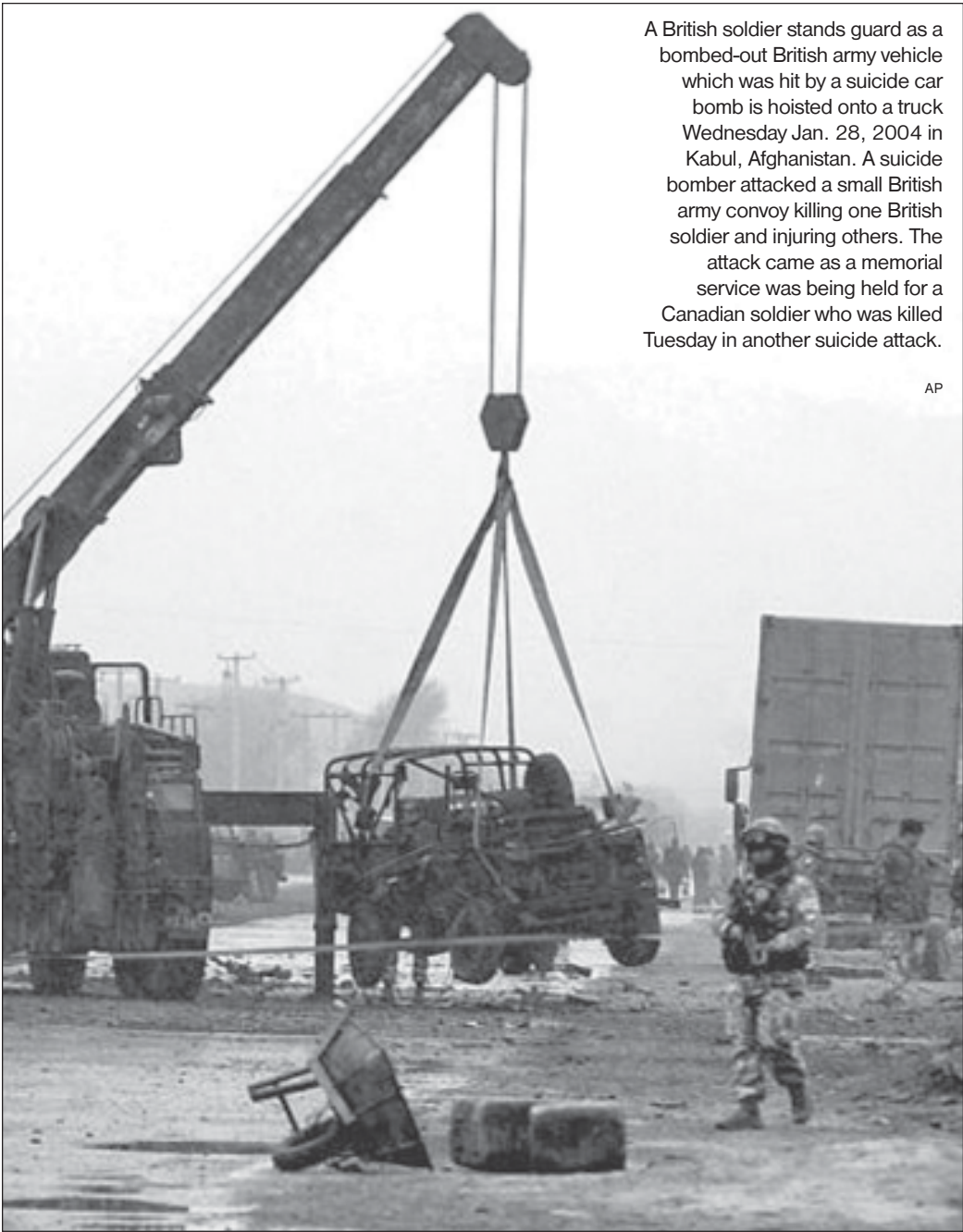
There were also to be research deals, including an accord with French jet engine maker Snecma, a nuclear fusion

project with France’s Atomic Energy Commission and plans for joint work on disease epidemics with the Paris-based Pasteur Institute.

“French businesses are generally of a high technological level, while Chinese enterprises are manufacturers,” said French Commerce Minister Francois Loos. “They complement each other naturally and that’s what we have to exploit.”

Critics of China’s policies on Tibet and its human rights record have protested during Hu’s visit. Scores of lawmakers boycotted Hu’s address Tuesday to parliament. Only about 240 of the 577 lawmakers attended.





A British soldier stands guard as a bombed-out British army vehicle which was hit by a suicide car bomb is hoisted onto a truck Wednesday Jan. 28, 2004 in Kabul, Afghanistan. A suicide bomber attacked a small British army convoy killing one British soldier and injuring others. The attack came as a memorial service was being held for a Canadian soldier who was killed Tuesday in another suicide attack.

AP

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# Afghan suicide bomber kills one British soldier

By STEPHEN GRAHAM  
AP WRITER

**KABUL, Afghanistan** (AP)—A suicide car bomber blew himself up in a taxi next to British peacekeepers patrolling the Afghan capital Wednesday, killing one soldier and wounding four.

It was the second suicide assault on foreign troops in as many days, marking an escalation in the Taliban-led rebellion—and increasing its parallels with the insurgency in Iraq. In response, U.S. forces in Afghanistan are planning a spring offensive, Pentagon officials said Wednesday.

The British soldier died after a yellow and white taxi carrying 200 pounds of explosives blew up near his open-topped Land Rover at about 11 a.m. in the eastern outskirts of Kabul, said Nayamatullah Jalili, intelligence chief at the Interior Ministry. He said an Afghan was also killed—apparently the assailant.

“The preliminary investigation suggests it was a suicide attack,” Jalili said.

Four other British soldiers were wounded, two of them seriously, Col. Mike Griffiths, commander of the 300-strong British contingent in the NATO-

led peacekeeping force, said at a news conference in its fortified headquarters. He declined to identify any of the British soldiers or their unit.

An Afghan translator also was wounded.

“These attacks will strengthen our resolve to fight terrorism and free our peace-loving country from its effect,” President Hamid Karzai said in praising troops for helping secure the capital.

The bomb exploded as a somber ceremony was under way in Kabul to honor the Canadian soldier killed by a bomber Tuesday. A Taliban spokesman claimed the Islamic militant group was behind both attacks, declaring the start of a nationwide campaign of suicide bombings.

International troops and Afghan security forces closed off the scene of Wednesday’s bombing on a busy road near the main British and German peacekeeping barracks.

German military trucks with machine-gunners barred traffic, while British Gurkhas—troops from Nepal—stood guard among shipping containers used as storefronts along the road.

Soldiers and investigators swarmed the Land Rover, its

front ripped open and badly charred. There was little left of the attacker’s car, which British military spokesman Capt. Tom Smith said exploded as the Land Rover was passing.

“There was an axle with a wheel and a lot of twisted metal,” Smith said.

The blast blew out the windows of a nearby bathhouse, sending people scurrying from the showers, said Zulgai, 20, a worker there who uses only one name.

Mullah Hakim Latifi, who claims to speak for the Taliban, said one of its members carried out the attack, at first intended for the base of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force.

“His target was the ISAF base. But he saw British troops so he exploded the car there,” he told The Associated Press by telephone. “We are compelled to attack the foreigners to defend our country, religion and honor.”

His claim couldn’t be independently verified.

Latifi also claimed Taliban responsibility for Tuesday’s attack on the Canadian patrol, which killed one Canadian and wounded three Canadian troops and eight civilians, including a Frenchman.



Soldiers at Camp Julien prepare to transport the body of Cpl. Jamie Murphy Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2004. Murphy died when a suicide bomber targeted a Canadian patrol near Kabul Tuesday.

# Pentagon plans Afghan spring offensive

By PAULINE JELINEK  
AP WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Pentagon is planning a new offensive in the 2-year-old Afghanistan campaign to stop remnants of the Taliban regime and the al-Qaida terror network, officials said Wednesday, even as a second suicide assault on foreign troops in Kabul in as many days killed one British soldier and injured four.

The attack on international peacekeepers in Kabul, the Afghan capital, drew new attention to a worsening security situation in a country where American and other Western troops have been stationed since the fall of the Taliban’s leadership in early 2002.

Rebels’ use of roadside explosives and car bombs in the recent wave of attacks has led to new comparisons with the insurgency in Iraq.

At the Pentagon, orders have been

issued to prepare equipment and supplies for the coming offensive, although the operation will not necessarily require additional troops in the region, a defense official said on condition of anonymity. The upcoming operation, first reported by the Chicago Tribune, has been dubbed the “spring offensive.”

Another Pentagon official declined to discuss the possibility that troops would extend operations to the Pakistan side of the border, where al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden and top lieutenants have long been said to be hiding. But the official said that might have to be the next step.

Defense Department officials believe current operations in Afghanistan are not having the effect they want on the terrorist network and they are determined to do more, the official said.

Officials already have said they

hope to finally capture bin Laden this year, a development that could benefit President Bush in the November election. About 11,000 U.S. troops are in the region.

One senior defense official said Pentagon leaders determined a couple of months ago that it is important to catch bin Laden, more for the symbolism than for his military value.

“I can say that Osama bin Laden and (and former Taliban leader) Mullah Omar represent a threat to the world, and they need to be destroyed, and we believe we will catch them in the next year,” Lt. Col. Bryan Hilferty, a spokesman for military forces in the region, told CNN.

The top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Lt. Gen. David W. Barno, said last month that hundreds of al-Qaida fighters still appear to be active in Khost and neighboring provinces on the long Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

# Group wants China to free 54 dissidents

BEIJING (AP)—Amnesty International called Wednesday for the release of 54 people jailed in China for expressing opinions on the Internet, citing a “dramatic rise” in the number detained for anything from political speech to spreading news about SARS.

In a report released Wednesday, the London-based group said the 54 cases it had documented represented a significant increase from the 33 people listed in its November 2002 report.

Amnesty said the 54 cases were likely just “a fraction” of the actual number of people detained for opinions expressed online.

“China is said to have in place the most extensive censorship of the Internet of any country in the world,” Amnesty said.

The organization said the prisoners included people who signed online petitions for government reform, published non-official news about SARS, communicated with dissident groups overseas, or called

for a review of Beijing’s bloody 1989 crackdown on demonstrators in Tiananmen Square. Detainees also include followers of the banned spiritual group Falun Gong, it said.

China’s Foreign Ministry could not immediately be reached for comment early Wednesday. In the past, it has denounced Amnesty’s claims as biased and baseless.

Amnesty said the number of people detained for sharing information about severe acute respiratory syndrome was especially hard to determine.

The Chinese government was criticized for keeping last year’s SARS outbreak under wraps in its initial weeks, and many in China resorted to sharing rumors about the disease by e-mail, online bulletin boards and mobile-phone text messages.

While China eventually allowed more reporting on SARS, Amnesty renewed its call for Beijing to ensure the media can report freely on the disease in the event of another large outbreak.

# Japan passes bill on N. Korea sanctions

TOKYO (AP)—Japan’s lower house passed a bill Thursday to make it easier to impose economic sanctions on North Korea, a step aimed at pressuring Pyongyang to hand over relatives of Japanese abducted decades ago.

Backed by both the ruling and main opposition parties, the legislation passed easily with a majority of lawmakers standing in show of support. There was no official tally of the vote.

The bill does not mention North Korea, but lawmakers say it is aimed at the reclusive state.

Officials in Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s government also have said they don’t have any plans to impose sanctions, but the government is trying to build pressure

on North Korea to agree to talks on the abductions.

“Economic sanctions are one tool of diplomacy,” Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said before the bill was passed. “It would be beneficial to have such a tool for policymaking.”

The bill will go to the upper house for consideration next week.

The legislation would enable Japan to take measures including banning imports of North Korean goods and freezing remittances from North Koreans living in Japan. The money is badly needed by the isolated country’s devastated economy.

Ahead of the Thursday vote, North Korea warned the bill would exacerbate tensions in the region.

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World

Italian premier admits plastic surgery

**ROME (AP)**—Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi acknowledged Wednesday that he recently had cosmetic surgery—but said it was only under his eyes.

The billionaire premier dropped out of public view for nearly a month beginning at the end of December, prompting speculation he might be ill. A doctor first said Berlusconi had a touchup around his eyes, but then denied he knew anything about it.

Chatting at a reception Wednesday for Italian designers during high fashion week in Rome, Berlusconi acknowledged having cosmetic surgery, but quickly added it was “only under the eyes.”

The admission comes days after the left-leaning L’Espresso reported that Berlusconi underwent extensive plastic surgery on his face and neck. The newsweekly said the operation took place in a Swiss clinic in late December and was led by a top California surgeon. Berlusconi’s convalescence was complicated by swelling around one of his eyes, the magazine said.

The premier’s office declined to comment on the reports.

Army may keep forces in Iraq through '06

By ROBERT BURNS  
AP MILITARY WRITER

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—The Army’s top general said Wednesday he is making plans based on the possibility that the Army will be required to keep tens of thousands of soldiers in Iraq through 2006.

Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, the Army chief of staff, told the House Armed Services Committee that “for planning purposes”, he has ordered his staff to consider how the Army would replace the force that is now rotating into Iraq with another force of similar size in 2005—and again in 2006.

Stretched by commitments in Iraq, Afghanistan, South Korea and the Balkans, the Army has used emergency authority to go beyond the limit set by Congress on the number of soldiers who can be in uniform, Schoomaker said.

He said the Army now is about 11,000 soldiers above the 482,400 limit and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has authorized the service to temporarily exceed the limit by as much as 30,000.

The decision about when to



New Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker testifies on Capitol Hill Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2004, before the House Armed Services Committee hearing on military preparedness.

end the U.S. military presence in Iraq will be made by President Bush and his national security aides, in consultation with American commanders in Iraq. As a service chief, Schoomaker’s role is to ensure that soldiers are trained and equipped for any mission the president requires.

Of the 105,000 troops going to Iraq this winter and spring to replace

the 130,000 who have been there since the start of the war, about 80,000 are Army soldiers. The replacement force, which includes 25,000 Marines, is scheduled to spend a full year in Iraq.

Army officials have said that planning for the 2005 rotation of forces into Iraq will begin in February.

Schoomaker said he was

opposed to Congress passing legislation to permanently expand the size of the Army, mainly because it would be too costly.

“I’m adamant that that is not the way to go,” the Army chief said.

Even while the Iraq war continues, the Pentagon is planning a new offensive in the two-year-old Afghanistan

campaign to try to stop remnants of the Taliban regime and the al-Qaida terrorist network, officials said Wednesday.

Orders have been issued to prepare equipment and supplies, though the operation will not necessarily require additional troops in the region, where about 11,000 Americans are still deployed, a defense official said on condition of anonymity.

Schoomaker said the Army is enjoying success in recruiting new soldiers.

“There are more people lining up to come in than we’ve ever had, and the quality of those people is higher than it’s ever been, and there’s no indication right now that that’s not going to continue,” he said.

Members of the House panel expressed surprise that Rumsfeld had agreed that the Army needed as many as 30,000 more soldiers, since he has publicly opposed a legislative move to expand the service.

Rep. Ellen O. Tauscher, D-Calif., said it sounded as if Rumsfeld was accomplishing through the use of his own executive powers the troop increase that he had resisted on Capitol Hill.

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# Jordan, Bulgaria probe Saddam bribe claim

By JAMAL HALABY  
AP WRITER

**AMMAN, Jordan (AP)**—Jordan and Bulgaria announced Wednesday they were investigating allegations prominent citizens were involved in a scam involving illicit sales of Iraqi oil in exchange for political support of Saddam Hussein while he was Iraq’s leader.

And in Egypt, activist Mamdouh el-Sheik said he would ask his country’s prosecutor-general to reopen an investigation on the involvement of Egyptians after reports about alleged kickbacks.

An Iraqi newspaper, one of

dozens of new dailies that have begun publishing in that country since Saddam’s ouster last April, first reported the alleged bribes this week. Members of the new provisional Iraqi government and opponents of Saddam have since distributed a list of the accused, based on documents from the Iraqi Oil Ministry.

About 270 former Cabinet officials, legislators, political activists and journalists from more than 46 countries are on the list, suspected of profiting from Iraqi oil sales that Saddam allegedly offered them in exchange for cultivating political and popular support in their countries.

Also on the list is the head of the U.N. oil-for-food program, which ended three months ago, that had allowed the Saddam regime to sell limited quantities of oil to raise funds to help the Iraqi population.

Benon Sevan has repeatedly dismissed previous allegations of corruption in the program, challenging those who make them to provide the evidence. The United Nations defended him again on Wednesday.

“We have seen the reports of these unconfirmed allegations. The oil-for-food program which Mr. Sevan was charged with has been satisfactorily audited many

times, both internally and externally,” said Marie Okabe, U.N. associate spokeswoman. “The secretary-general is fully satisfied with Mr. Sevan’s performance and integrity in administering what was a massive and unprecedented humanitarian program.”

The list gives the names of 14 Amman-based firms and Jordanian citizens, including former government officials and legislators.

“The issue is under follow-up, and we are seeking to verify if some people have acquired (Iraqi) graft,” Mohammad al-Halaiqa, a deputy prime minister

and minister of trade and industry, told Jordan’s parliament in response to an inquiry by deputy Saad Hayel Srour on the alleged bribes. Srour demanded an immediate government investigation.

Al-Halaiqa said the Cabinet discussed the alleged Jordanian involvement in the Iraqi bribes at a meeting late Tuesday. Finance Minister Mohammad Abu-Hammour “was given clear instructions to follow up on this issue and collect any dues to the Treasury,” he added.

The Baghdad list also says the Bulgarian Socialist Party had sold 12 million barrels of Iraqi oil.

Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov said the charge that his Socialist Party received money from Iraq was “ill-advised black humor,” but he ordered an inquiry into the accusation, his office said Wednesday.

The party leader, Sergei Stanishev, told journalists in Bulgaria on Wednesday: “Not a cent from Iraq has been received at our party headquarters.”

“The Socialist Party leadership has not negotiated such economic projects with the Baath party. We have not authorized anyone to hold such talks,” Stanishev said. He said his party wanted the matter to be cleared up.

## Bomber kills three outside Baghdad hotel

**BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)**—A suicide bomber blew up a van disguised as an ambulance in front of a hotel Wednesday after speeding through a security barrier in the heart of Baghdad, killing three people—including a South African—and injuring 17.

Also, in the southern city of Nasiriyah, about 10,000 followers of a radical Shiite Muslim cleric forced the coalition-appointed provincial governor to vacate his office, insisting they would recognize only elected leaders.

“No to Israel! No to imperialism! No to America!” the crowd chanted. Coalition officials said the governor left his office to defuse tensions but did not resign.

The bombing at the Shaheen—a hotel frequented by Westerners—confirmed intelligence warnings that insurgents might use ambulances to evade security checks.

It also reinforced fears voiced by U.S. officials that insurgents would step up attacks ahead of the planned July 1

transfer of power by the U.S.-led coalition to Iraqis. It was the second suicide bombing in the capital in less than two weeks.

Witnesses said a white van with Red Crescent markings drove through an opening in the barbed wire and concrete cylinder barriers on Masbah Street at about 6:40 a.m.

They said guards opened fire at the van but it managed to reach the front of the Shaheen Hotel, where it exploded. The U.S. military said the van was packed with 400-500 pounds of explosives.

Police and the U.S. military said four people, including the bomber, were killed. One was South African, according to South African Foreign Ministry spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa. He said four South Africans were among the injured.

The blast left a huge crater in the street and destroyed the ground floor of the three-story hotel, which was used by long-term guests, including Iraq’s labor minister, Sami Izara al-

Majoun. He was unhurt.

“My guards came to the room and rushed me downstairs. The hotel was burning and there was fire and smoke everywhere,” al-Majoun said.

One of his guards, Rassol Karim, said the bomber “was trying to drive into the hotel.”

Several embassies, including the Swiss, Polish and Armenian, are located in the posh Karadah neighborhood. The blast damaged at least three nearby buildings, including one housing police assigned to protect the embassies.

The blast hurled remains of one car across the street. Several other cars caught fire and were reduced to mounds of twisted metal.

At least five hotels used by foreigners in Baghdad have been attacked by insurgents with car bombs, rockets and other explosive devices.

On Jan. 18, at least 31 people were killed in a suicide bombing at a main gate to the headquarters of the U.S.-led coalition. Most of the dead were Iraqis.



AP  
U.S. soldiers carry an injured man from the scene of an explosion at a Baghdad hotel Wednesday Jan. 28, 2004. A car bomb exploded in front of a hotel in central Baghdad Wednesday, partially destroying the three-storey building and gutting several cars.

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# Canada to probe US deportation case

By COLIN McCLELLAND  
AP WRITER

**TORONTO (AP)**—Canada said Wednesday it will hold a full public inquiry into the deportation of an Ottawa engineer to Syria, where he says he was tortured -

an incident that has rankled Canadian-U.S. relations.

Maher Arar, a Syrian-born Canadian, was detained by U.S. authorities in New York in 2002 while on his way home from a visit to Tunisia. Intelligence officials had raised suspicions

about alleged links to al-Qaida.

U.S. authorities deported him to Syria, where he says he was tortured. Released Oct. 5 and now back in Canada, Arar has vehemently denied being a terrorist and has not been charged with any crime.

“I want the facts,” Prime Minister Paul Martin said Wednesday. “I want to know exactly what did happen.”

Arar, 33, welcomed the announcement as “a great day for Canadian justice.

“It is ... very important to ensure this inquiry can, indeed, clear my name and answer all of our questions so that we can begin to rebuild our lives,” Arar said.

Justice Dennis O’Connor, an Ontario Court of Appeal judge, was appointed to head the inquiry.

Deputy Prime Minister Anne McLellan said O’Connor “will assess the actions of Canadian officials in dealing with the deportation and detention of Maher Arar.”

“He will have all the powers set out in the (Inquiries) Act, including the authority to hold public hearings, summon witnesses, compel testimony and to gather such evidence as needed to conduct the inquiry,” said McLellan, who is also minister of public safety and emergency preparedness.

O’Connor will not be able to force U.S. authorities to participate in the inquiry. A public investigation into how intelligence on both sides of the border tracks suspected terrorists is not expected to be welcomed by Washington.

U.S. Ambassador Paul Cellucci insisted again Wednesday that U.S. officials acted alone when they decided to deport Arar.

“It is very clear that the decision to send Mr. Arar to Syria was made by the U.S. government without any consultation by Canada or anyone in the Canadian government,” Cellucci said.

The controversy surrounding

the treatment of Arar has dogged Martin’s government as well as that of his predecessor, Jean Chretien.

Canadian officials have said American authorities made a mistake in deporting Arar.

Martin had said he was awaiting the results of two separate inquiries, but recent events, including a raid by Royal Canadian Mounted Police on a journalist’s home and office to trace a government leak in the case, brought the issue to a head.

A spokeswoman for Arar, who has consistently urged a public inquiry since he returned to Canada, said he would comment later Wednesday.

## Man dies in clash with Haiti police

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)**—Angry students protesting against President Jean-Bertrand Aristide burned a coffin in front of the U.S. Consulate on Wednesday. One man died in a clash with police.

Riot police fired tear gas and warning shots to disperse students and Aristide partisans who were pelting the demonstrators with rocks.

One protester was killed after being struck by a tear gas canister, causing internal bleeding, said attending physician Eric Cantave.

“In spite of repeated appeals of police ... certain sectors continue to act in violation of the regulations” concerning demonstrations,” said government spokesman Mario Dupuy.

He said the victim was a supporter of Aristide’s Lavalas Family party.

Dozens of students crowded into the waiting room of the capital’s Canape Vert Hospital, sobbing and shouting anti-government slogans.

Later, they built a flaming tire barricade outside the hospital’s entrance, the radio station reported. Riot police stormed the hospital and detained at least 15 people. One police officer was injured by a rock.

Haiti has been in turmoil

since the Lavalas party swept 2000 legislative elections that observers said were flawed. In the past four months, at least 50 people have been killed.

The students want the United States to help them in calling for Aristide’s resignation. U.S. troops restored Aristide to power in 1994 after a coup.

“The United States is an important factor in the crisis. It has to assume its responsibility,” University of Haiti student leader Herve Saintilus said.

Officials temporarily shut down the U.S. Consulate because of the unrest, said Judith Trunzo, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Embassy, which remained open and is about one mile from the consulate.

Caribbean leaders have been trying to solve the country’s three-year political impasse, meeting in the Bahamas last week with Haitian opposition members and with Aristide on Sunday.

Aristide will meet with regional leaders on Friday in Jamaica.

The opposition says it will not hold talks with the government or participate in new elections unless Aristide resigns. Aristide has said he plans to serve out his term, which ends in 2006.

## 7 register to run for Russia’s presidency

**MOSCOW (AP)**—Seven candidates including Vladimir Putin filed papers ahead of Wednesday’s deadline to register for the March presidential election which Putin is expected to handily win a second term.

Two candidates running on party tickets have already been approved to run in the March 14 election. Five other candidates running independently, including Putin, submitted their documents with the required 2 million signatures to the Central Election Commission by the 6 p.m. Wednesday deadline.

Nationalist Sergei Glazyev and Irina Khakamada, the top liberal candidate, handed over their documents just hours before the deadline. Putin delivered his signatures Friday.

Another two hopefuls—liberal politician Ivan Rybkin and Sergei Mironov, speaker of the upper house of Russian parliament—also had already

submitted their signatures.

Typically, the independent candidates submit more than the required 2 million signatures in case some are deemed invalid. No one is allowed to submit more than 2.5 million.

The Election Commission has 10 days to check the candidates’ documents. Russia’s NTV television, citing election officials, said Putin could be registered on Monday.

So far, two Putin rivals—Nikolai Kharitonov of the Communist Party and Oleg Malyshkin of Vladimir Zhirinovsky’s ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party—have cleared the registration process.

Putin is the nation’s most popular politician. Nearly 80 percent of respondents in recent opinion surveys said they would vote for him if the elections were held today, while support for the other hopefuls measured in single digits.

## SABLAN TOPLINE

# Nigeria: N. Korea to help with missiles

By GLENN MCKENZIE  
AP WRITER

**LAGOS, Nigeria** (AP)—North Korea has agreed to share missile technology with Nigeria, the Nigerian government said Wednesday—a deal that would take the secretive communist nation’s missile business to sub-Saharan Africa.

If the deal goes through, Nigeria would join Libya, Iran, Egypt, Pakistan and Syria among countries reported to have received North Korea’s help with either missiles or missile technology.

Nigeria, which is not at war or under any known threat from other countries, said any missile help would be used for “peacekeeping” and to protect its territory. It said it was not seeking nuclear technology or weapons of mass destruction.

A Nigerian official said no hardware acquisitions had yet been made or decided. The government did not say whether Nigeria, the continent’s most populous nation and West Africa’s military giant, would obtain missiles or simply receive help making them.

Referring to the announcement—as well as press reports that Nigeria later turned down the offer—State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said: “Obviously, this issue of regional stability and military acquisition is something that we do care about, something that’s a regular part of our dialogue with Nigeria.”

North Korea largely exports “simple, robust” Scud missile technology—not up-to-date, but useful for countries with relatively unsophisticated militaries, said Rose Gottemoeller of the Washington-based Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Weapons sales are a major source of revenue for financially strapped North Korea, but it is unusual for one of its clients to talk about a transaction publicly.

Nigerian Vice President Atiku Abubakar reached the accord with Yang Hyong Sop, the visiting vice president of North Korea’s Presidium of the Supreme People’s Assembly, Abubakar’s spokesman, Onukaba Ojo, told The Associated Press.

The two committed to a “program of cooperation that includes missile technology,” Ojo said.

A statement from Abubakar’s office said Nigeria’s “government would continue to cooperate with the Korean government in the defense sector, an area in which both Nigeria and North Korea had cooperated over the years.”

The North Korean was in Nigeria’s capital, Abuja, on a bilateral visit from Tuesday to Saturday.

The United States alleges that Pyongyang reaped about \$560 million from missile sales in 2001.

South Korea downplayed the offer. “I see it as a tactic by North Korea to arouse anxiousness from the United States ahead of the second round of six-nation talks,” Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun said Thursday.

The deal made public Wednesday takes the North Koreans well out of their normal selling base, the Mideast, Gottemoeller said. “What is surprising is that they’re so far afield,” she said.

Nigeria would be North Korea’s first known sub-Saharan partner.

Ojo initially said both sides were committed to the deal, but later called back AP to say that “nothing was written in stone.”

Although North Korean officials had shown their Nigerian military counterparts a “catalog of what they have, nothing has been finalized and Nigeria has not taken any concrete steps toward acquiring it yet,” the Nigerian official said.

Ojo said he had not seen the catalog and did not know what kinds of missiles or other weapons were in it.

“This is just a memorandum of understanding. No action has been taken yet,” Ojo added.

Nigeria hopes the United States and other Western nations opposed to North Korean nuclear and weapons proliferation would respect the deal, Ojo said.

“We are a sovereign nation. We should be able to cooperate with any nation we wish to cooperate with as long as it is in the best interests of Nigeria,” he added, stressing Nigeria “is not shopping around for nuclear technology or weapons of mass destruction.”

“Whatever we are discussing with them is only to enhance the capability of our military for peacekeeping and to protect Nigeria’s territorial integrity,” Ojo added.

Nigeria’s military supplies much of the manpower of regional peace missions. Ojo declined to say what possible peacekeeping use missiles would have.

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and the North Korean official met Wednesday on economic matters. “As far as I know, there was no discussion on defense or military matters,” Obasanjo spokeswoman Remi Oyo said. Nigeria, with 126 million people, is a political and military heavyweight on the continent and a frequent recipient of U.S. military and law enforcement assistance.

# Kelly’s suicide verdict a boost to Blair

By THOMAS WAGNER  
AP WRITER

**LONDON** (AP)—Prime Minister Tony Blair won vindication Wednesday in the toughest political crisis of his career when a judge said the BBC was wrong to report the government “sexed up” intelligence to justify war in Iraq. The broadcaster’s top official stepped down within hours.

The verdict was a major boost for Blair, who has been dogged for months by questions about arms adviser David Kelly’s suicide, which injected personal tragedy into the highly charged debate over war.

It came a day after Blair eked out a win in a hard-fought parliamentary vote to raise college tuition fees, turning a potentially disastrous week into a demonstration of political survival skills.

Lord Hutton, a senior judge appointed by Blair to investigate Kelly’s suicide, cleared Blair and his officials of wrongdoing in connection with the death and sharply criticized the British Broadcasting Corp. for its reporting.

Hutton said he was not authorized to rule on the justification for war, but said the BBC was wrong to report officials knowingly put misleading claims in a September 2002 dossier summing up intelligence for the public. He called the charge “unfounded” and chastised BBC bosses for failing to scrutinize the story properly.

Blair quickly embraced Hutton’s conclusions, saying that while there was “an entirely legitimate argument about the wisdom of the conflict,” critics were wrong to accuse him of manipulating evidence.

“It is absolutely right that people can question whether the intelligence received was right and why we have not yet found weapons of mass destruction,”

board of governors, became the first in that position to quit over a story.

“The referee’s decision is final,” Davies said. He urged BBC staff, however, to “feel no shame” about the report and said the network had not deliberately misled the public or “acted out of malign motivation.”

BBC chief executive Greg Dyke accepted that “certain key allegations” in correspondent Andrew Gilligan’s May 29 radio report were wrong and apologized for them. But he said the network had never accused the prime minister of lying.

Gilligan made no public statement.

His story accusing Blair’s office of exaggerating the Iraqi threat set off a furious dispute between government and broadcaster.

Gilligan quoted an anonymous official—later identified as Kelly—as saying the government insisted on including in the dossier, despite intelligence experts’ doubts, a claim that Iraq could deploy some chemical and biological weapons on 45 minutes’ notice.

Hutton said that while he did not know whether that claim was correct, Gilligan’s charge that the government knew it was false but published it anyway was unfounded.

The judge also said BBC editors should have examined the reporter’s story before it aired, and the board of governors should have scrutinized his reporting sooner and more thoroughly when the government complained.

But the verdict was a huge blow for the BBC, which governs itself even though it is funded by mandatory public subscription. Gavyn Davies, chairman of the broadcaster’s



Blair

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# Science & Technology

By ANICK JESDANUN  
AP INTERNET WRITER

The continued spread of a cleverly engineered computer virus exposes a key flaw in the global embrace of technology: Its users are human. Posing as a legitimate computer error message, the worm successfully tricked e-mail recipients into spreading it to friends, co-workers and business associates.

Although users have grown wiser about falling for such tricks, virus writers have also gotten smarter about fooling them.

“People that are bent on doing these things continue to display a high degree of intelligence,” said Bob Jorgensen of Boeing Co., whose e-mail systems slowed down because of the worm. “We need to continue to work to stay one step ahead” through better technology and education.

MessageLabs Inc., which scans e-mail for viruses, said one in every 12 messages contained the worm, called “Mydoom” or “Novarg.” Security experts described it as the largest outbreak in months.

“It’s the trust factor you are exploiting,” said Oliver Friedrichs, senior research manager with anti-virus vendor Symantec Corp. “Most people,

when they receive something, they want to trust it. You don’t want to miss something people may be sending you.”

Upon activation—usually when a recipient clicks on an e-mail attachment—the rogue program searches though address books and sends itself to e-mail addresses it finds. It chooses one as the sender, so recipients may believe the message comes from someone known.

Unlike other mass-mailing worms, Mydoom does not attempt to trick victims by promising nude pictures of celebrities or mimicking personal notes. Rather, messages carry innocuous-sounding subject lines, like “Error” or “Server Report” and messages in the body such as “Mail transaction failed. Partial message is available.”

It is precisely because the message’s tone is so basic that many computer users conditioned to be suspect of attachments wound up opening Mydoom anyway, said Chuck Adams, chief security officer with NetSolve Inc., a security firm in Austin, Texas.

Some corporate networks were clogged with infected traffic within hours of its appearance Monday, and operators of many systems voluntarily shut down their e-mail to keep the worm from

spreading during the cleanup.

Keynote Systems Inc., which tracks Internet performance, recorded a slight degradation in Web site availability and speed.

The worm, however, falls short of a homeland security or national security threat, said Amit Yoran, the U.S. government’s cyber-security chief.

Mydoom infects computers that run Microsoft Corp.’s Windows operating systems, though other computers were affected by network slowdowns and a flood of bogus messages. Unlike other recent attacks, it

does not appear to exploit any Windows security flaw.

Besides sending out tainted e-mail, the program appears to open up a backdoor so hackers can take over the computer later. The worm also tries to spread through the Kazaa file-sharing network and was programmed to try to overwhelm the Web site of The SCO Group Inc. beginning Sunday by repeatedly sending fake requests.

SCO’s site has been targeted before because of its threats to sue users of the Linux operating system in an intellectual property

dispute, and spokesman Blake Stowell said the site was unavailable at times Tuesday, apparently because of infected computers set to the wrong date.

On Tuesday, SCO announced a \$250,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Mydoom’s creator.

Anti-virus vendors have posted software updates to catch the worm, and security experts warned computer users not to open questionable attachments, the Mydoom ones carrying extensions like “.exe,” “.scr,” “.cmd,” “.pif” or “.zip.”

But no amount of warning will ever eliminate threats entirely.

“Folks are just going to fall prey to things that look like familiar things that happen to their e-mail, like getting an error message, a forwarded message or a reply message,” said Lee Rainie, director of the Pew Internet and American Life Project.

With 128 million Americans already online—and newcomers less aware of these tricks joining all the time—“it takes a relatively small fraction of folks to make mistakes,” he said.

## Apple to build second supercomputer

By CHRIS KAHN  
AP WRITER

After building one of the world’s fastest supercomputers on its first try, Apple Computer Inc. is again teaming with Virginia Tech to make another high performance machine using its new 64-bit Xserve G5 computer.

Xserve, a thinner, more compact machine designed for clustering with other computers, will replace the supercomputer Tech built in November using off-the-shelf G5 PowerMacs.

Tech project leader Srinidhi Varadarajan said the university will upgrade from PowerMacs to Xserves in April or May. Tech is still negotiating the price with Apple, though Varadarajan said Monday any additional cost to the school would be “fairly minimal.”

Tech’s cluster of 1,100 G5s surprised the supercomputing world last year by performing 10.3 trillion operations per second—making it the third-fastest machine in the world. Varadarajan and his staff of student volunteers built it in just weeks for \$7 million, a fraction of the cost of traditional supercomputers.

In comparison, the world’s fastest machine, Earth Simulator Center in Japan, cost at least

\$250 million and can run 35.9 trillion operations per second. The next fastest is a \$215 million Hewlett-Packard computer at Los Alamos National Laboratory that can complete 13.9 trillion operations per second.

Xserves use the same IBM PowerPC 970 microprocessors and Mac OS X operating system and the upgraded supercomputer will use the same high-speed Infiniband network as the G5.

They’re better for super-computing because they were designed for a network setting, while the PowerMac was built for personal computing, said Phil Schiller, Apple’s senior vice president of worldwide product marketing.

“Xserves have information displays in the front that tell you what’s happening with processors, what’s happening with network connections at a glance, while a desktop doesn’t do any of that,” Schiller said.

And at 1.75 inches thick, the Xserves are built for stacking. They’ll effectively shrink Tech’s supercomputer to one-third its current size. The specialized components also will produce less heat, work more efficiently and ultimately make a faster machine, Varadarajan said, though he doesn’t know how fast.

fun & games  
+blue

By JOHN MORAN  
THE HARTFORD COURANT

We’ve seen how computers have transformed the way consumers listen to music.

Not only has song downloading—both paid and unpaid—become popular, but people are copying audio CDs to their computers, carrying MP3 players in their knapsacks and cars, and generally treating music like just another form of data. Which, of course, it is.

Get ready to see the same thing happen to television programming.

A slew of new product announcements coming out of the annual Consumer Elec-

tronics Show in Las Vegas shows tech companies are intent on bridging the gap between PC and TV.

Microsoft, Intel, Dell, Hewlett-Packard and others say computing technology can enhance the way we manage and enjoy our video. TV shows, family videos or Hollywood movies may never be the same.

Does this ring a bell? Tech companies have been talking about such “convergence” of various entertainment devices for years.

Though the vision has been around for years, the execution has been spotty. In speed and storage, personal computers were simply not up to the job of

handling multimedia files.

But in the last year or two, that equation has begun to change. Processor speeds now exceed 3 gigahertz, meaning PCs have plenty of horsepower when it comes to digesting and displaying video. Big, inexpensive hard drives offer plenty of storage, as do DVD burners. Wireless networks provide a handy way to move the data around without rewiring the whole house.

We’ve also seen a variety of specialized computing devices emerge to handle multimedia content. Personal video recorders such as TiVO and ReplayTV give consumers the flexibility to handle

television recording without tying up the PC they use for e-mail and Web surfing.

Microsoft’s Windows Media Center operating system has encouraged the notion that people might want a separate computer solely as a server of music, video, photos and more.

This trend toward multimedia computing devices is going to continue, if the Consumer Electronics Show is any indicator.

Consider, for example, the Prismiq Inc.’s MediaPlayer device—a multimedia hub that wirelessly links your television and stereo to your PC. From a comfortable seat on your sofa, you browse and

play songs from your hard drive or send video in the other direction to record a show for later viewing. The Prismiq MediaPlayer even lets you use your TV for Web browsing. At a new price point of \$199, it’s well within the reach of many consumers.

A new generation of cable TV set-top boxes, such as the Moxi by Digeo Inc., is set to incorporate hard drives that will permit users to record programming.

Say farewell to the VCR. You might actually be able to program these new recorders without taking night classes.

The devices are here, but the transformation of our dens and

living rooms into computer-driven multimedia centers won’t happen overnight. Instead, we’ll see this convergence trend unfold little by little—a new set-top box one day, later a new wireless device, later a new PC.

Although hard-core hobbyists are sure to try the new gear as soon as they can, the rest of us should be patient for just a little longer.

Technology companies have come a long way in creating new and better convergence devices. But with millions of dollars being poured into research and development, those who can wait should see even better products at cheaper prices in another year or two.

## Software review: ToySight

By KEVIN SAVETZ  
THE WASHINGTON POST

TOYSIGHT, Freeverse Games/Strange Flavour

This quirky software makes Apple’s iSight webcam useful even when nobody you know is online. Like Sony’s Eye Toy add-on for PlayStation 2, ToySight lets you play games by moving your arms and hands in front of a camera; its software interprets these movements as game controls but also superimposes your image on the screen, so you can see what you are controlling. Interpreting video movement in this way is inexact and often frustrating, but an uncluttered background, a well-lighted room and plenty of space to move around help.

ToySight’s nine bundled games include an alien-blasting exercise called Marble Factory, a version of Pong, an

unusual skydiving game and The Owl and the Pussycat, in which you, as the owl, must rescue your feline friend from a castle in his talons. Two video toys also come with the program; one adds graphic effects to your image and the other lets you pluck out a tune on an onscreen “laser harp.” Even the program’s menus are navigated with video: To play a game, reach in the air to “press” its button.

Once you get past the novelty of controlling the computer without touching it, some of the ToySight games reveal themselves to be little more than clever game demos. But others, such as Marble Factory and The Plank (a puzzle game in which you stack similar marbles), feel just right, offering fun for adults or kids.

Details: Mac OS X 10.1.5 or newer, \$35 at [www.toysight.com](http://www.toysight.com).

By LAURIE WILLIS  
THE BALTIMORE SUN

Smoke breaks are common in the workplace, but increasingly people are taking interludes from their jobs without leaving their desks—and having fun in the process.

That’s because more and more people are playing games online, says Jessica Rovello, chairwoman of Arkadium Inc., a New York-based company that creates game software that allows computer users to download a gaming interface to their computer desktop for playing backgammon, chess and checkers.

“This is not blackjack,” Rovello says. “This is not poker. This is arcade games, chess and solitaire. It’s for the average Joe. It’s not intimidating. It’s not overly technical. It’s just fun.”

Gamers can go online and

play others around the world.

Arkadium offers players a chance to choose an avatar, a graphic representation of themselves, and to instant message each other through chat rooms—often to challenge others to a game.

“Our goal in the way we designed it was to bring friends together, college roommates, brothers and sisters who might live in different areas of the country and have always played backgammon against each other but who might want to play for a little bit more than just bragging rights,” Rovello says.

Arkadium is running a special that allows people to play up to 2,000 games in a year at no cost. After 2,000 games are played, subscribers can pay \$12.99 for three months of unlimited games or \$24.95 for a year.

Milo [the only name he uses

online], 26, of Orlando, Fla., has been playing games through the Arkadium Gamedek interface about a year. He says he gets online a few hours each day for checkers, chess and some of the strategy games.

“I can usually get a game pretty fast if I’m online,” says Milo, who was casting about for an opponent in the chat area this week. “I obviously have to have a player willing to play right in front of me, which isn’t all that easy to get.”

Arkadium has up and running 22 of the 30 games it plans to offer. Others will be added in the next few weeks.

With games such as checkers and skeet shooting (using the mouse), you might think mostly young men were playing online. But Rovello says that’s hardly the case. While males may be part of the clientele, most of the Arkadium subscribers are women older than age 35, Rovello says. “It’s interesting,” she says. “When you think about the stereotypical Internet user and gamer, you don’t think of a mature woman, but that’s who it is.”

Rovello says that online subscribers are playing more than 1.5 million games a month through Arkadium’s distribution channels. Arkadium has several partners in its online gaming efforts, including Terra.com, the largest Spanish portal on the Internet.

Gamers who want to get the Gamedek desktop interface can go to [www.arkadium.com](http://www.arkadium.com) and sign up.

The gaming interface will allow you to bet money on the games you play, depending on whether Internet wagering on games is legal in your community.

Winning cash from playing games such as chess, which require skill, is seen differently by the law than winning on slot machines, which are games of chance, Rovello says. That is why Arkadium Inc. can legally offer its games in many of the states that it does, she says.

Arkadium requires users to be at least age 18, because of the availability of cash betting in some states, Rovello says.

The system allows a \$25 maximum bet per game, she says.

pss speed

cda meet



Life & Style

Met opera replaces soprano in ‘Tosca’

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Ines Salazar sang the dress rehearsal of “Tosca” last week in preparation for her Metropolitan Opera debut. She never made it to opening night.

The Venezuelan soprano was replaced by Sylvie Valayre for Monday night’s opener of the 1985 Franco Zeffirelli production.

A person who attended Thursday’s dress rehearsal, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said Salazar was not in good voice.

Joseph Volpe, the Met’s general manager, said in a statement that Salazar was “indisposed.” Joel Thomas, her manager at Askonas Holt Ltd. in London, did not return a telephone call Wednesday seeking comment.

Salazar, who turns 33 next week, sang “Tosca” in the 100th anniversary performance in Rome four years ago, with Luciano Pavarotti as her Cavaradossi and Placido Domingo conducting.

She was to have sung a total of seven times in the Puccini opera through Feb. 26. For the remainder of the performances that were to have included her, she will be replaced by Maria Guleghina and Cynthia Lawrence.

Guleghina wasn’t available for the opener because she was in Tblisi on Sunday for the inauguration of Georgia President Mikhail Saakashvili.

Release of Limbaugh’s letters questioned

**WEST PALM BEACH, Fla.** (AP)—The state Attorney General’s office on Wednesday questioned the motives of local prosecutors who released letters from Rush Limbaugh’s attorney, accusing them of hiding facts in the case.

When prosecutors released the letters last week, they cited support from the Attorney General’s office and the Florida Bar. But both groups now have contradicted the prosecutors.

The letters detail discussions between prosecutors and Limbaugh’s attorney over whether the conservative radio commentator would plead guilty to doctor shopping for prescription painkillers.

Limbaugh has not been arrested and no charges have been filed in the months-long investigation.

State General Counsel Patricia R. Gleason told Palm

Met offers close-up of Egyptian tombs

By DEEPTI HAJELA  
AP WRITER

The sculptor and painter must have had artistic differences. The figures carved into the Egyptian tomb of Perneb were, perhaps, a little too wide for the painter’s aesthetic sense. The carvings weren’t completely filled in when the time came to paint them, making them look that much thinner.

It’s the kind of detail visitors to the Egyptian exhibits at the Metropolitan Museum of Art might never have noticed because of the glass barriers that kept them from getting too near.

But now visitors have a rare opportunity to get close to the walls of two ancient tombs. The glass coverings have been removed as part of a major renovation project, and new ones won’t be in place for six weeks.

Starting Thursday, visitors will be allowed, five at a time, to enter the tomb of Perneb and gaze at the carvings, which were put on the walls sometime between 2380 B.C. and 2350 B.C.

While not allowed to touch—a guard will make sure of that—onlookers still get a much clearer view than ever before.

“You really have that intimacy, which is very difficult to get in a museum,” Dorothea Arnold, the Met’s curator of Egyptian art, said.

It’s that intimate view that gives visitors the chance to see the discrepancy between the carvings and how they were painted. Arnold pointed out that the figures were consistently painted thinner than carved, and noted that the tomb came from an era when artists were shifting to a more streamlined representation of the human figure.

Visitors also will have



Jennifer Townley, left, prepares to take a picture inside the Tomb of Perneb during a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art with Jaspal Singh, center, as museum security Cris Sunwoo stands guard, Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2004, in New York.

unfettered access to the tomb of Raemkai, which dates to around 2450 B.C. The walls of the tomb had been taken apart and laid flat for previous display; now, the museum has reinstalled them in a three-dimensional form.

Without the glass barriers, viewers of Raemkai can see how the drawings were altered when the tomb originally built for one man was reused for another.

Changing the glass coverings is part of a renovation project involving five galleries

in the museum’s Egyptian art section. In all, the section covers a time span of more than 4,000 years in 32 galleries.

The project began in 2002 and is nearly complete. It includes reconfiguring the tomb of Perneb for greater historical accuracy, rearranging the artifacts, and bringing in more natural light. The museum brought in stone from Egypt to re-create portions of a wall in front of the tomb, another attempt to reinforce historical accuracy.

Museum officials decided to change the glass barriers because they were difficult to clean and not in prime condition after years of visitors. When they removed the glass, it was “just a dream” to see the walls up close, Arnold said. The museum decided to share that extraordinary experience with the public by opening the galleries under tight restrictions while waiting for new protective glass.

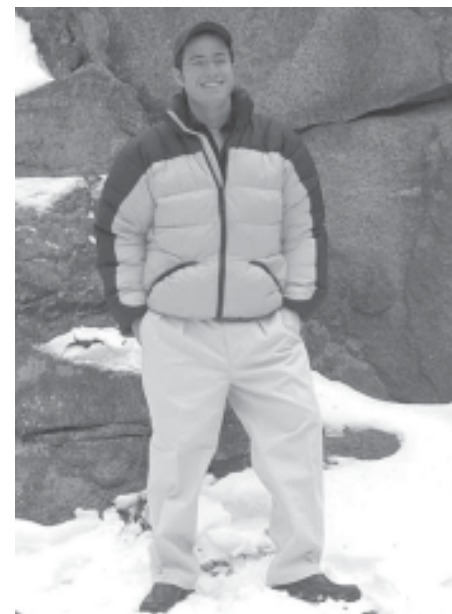
The need to protect the artifacts prompted the presence of the guard. Arnold said the museum would also monitor air conditions in the rooms, making sure the environment won’t harm the exposed walls.

crm notice





Climbing Mount Everest is one of many challenges undertaken by Dr. Kenneth Kamler.



AP  
Britton Keeshan 22 of Greenwich Conn., poses for a photograph at his family's home Tuesday Jan. 27, 2004, after he returned from Antarctica where he climbed its highest mountain.

## Grandson, 22, using Keeshan as inspiration

**GREENWICH, Conn. (AP)**—Britton Keeshan is using inspiration from Captain Kangaroo in his bid to become the youngest person to climb the tallest mountain on each continent.

Keeshan is the grandson of Bob Keeshan, who died Friday at 76 after a career in which he entertained millions of children as the walrus-mustachioed television captain.

Britton Keeshan, a 22-year-old college student, is on a quest to climb the "Seven Summits," the tallest peaks on each continent. He's reached the top of six so far, starting at age 15, and will leave in March to attempt Mount Everest by May.

A Japanese climber holds the record: He accomplished the feat days after he turned 23. But Keeshan believes lessons learned from his grandfather will help him set a new record.

"His memory will be pushing me to strive even harder than I've ever strived before," he said in an interview Tuesday at his home in Greenwich. "He really just pushed me to push the boundaries and seek the outer limits of whatever I was doing."

## BOOK REVIEW

"Words You Thought You Knew...1001 Commonly Misused and Misunderstood Words and Phrases,"

By Jenna Glatzer (Adams Media, 310 pps., \$8.95)

Reviewed By MICHAEL PAKENHAM  
THE BALTIMORE SUN

Jenna Glatzer has specialized in counseling her fellow free-lance writers, in two books and in periodicals. Here, she puts together a useful, brightly presented set of admonitions to use language correctly with emphasis on errors that have become clichés. It's "champing at the bit," not "chomping." And she straightens out the "lay/lie" muddlement nicely and precisely.

She's fiercely derisive of anyone who commits the "could care less" crime against the ear and reason. A very substantial number of the entries are so basic that anyone who needs be instructed or reminded of the meaning or a distinction is doubtful to be a reader at all: "pray/prey," "avenge/revenge," "bald-faced/bold-faced."

But in an era in which laziness in language is pandemic, there is usefulness and persuasiveness enough here to make it valuable.

# Climbing Everest keeps doctor in peak writing form

By BILL BLEYER  
NEWSDAY

He was on Mount Everest in spring 1995, only 1,500 vertical feet from the summit. "I could see the curvature of the earth," Kamler writes of the experience. "I had climbed into outer space."

But the snow was unusually deep that year and he and his eight companions ran low on oxygen. "We turned around." He did not reach the summit, but he was not disappointed. Having the goal, he says, is the appeal.

And he's already reached plenty of those.

A Bronx childhood may not seem the most promising launching pad for climbing Mount Everest and tackling other extreme adventures around the globe. But it certainly hasn't held back Kamler.

The 56-year-old orthopedic microsurgeon from the Queens borough of New York has been on six expeditions to the world's highest mountain. He's climbed peaks in Antarctica, the Alps and Andes. And he's had incredible journeys in the jungle and under the sea, to boot.

And now he has had his second book published. "Surviving the Extremes," published by St. Martin's Press, is not just about his exploits. It recounts the experiences of Kamler as well as others who pushed themselves to the limits of endurance, sometimes by choice, other times because of fate.

When two commercial teams of climbers were caught in a storm on Everest in 1996, Kamler was the only

doctor on the mountain. His treatment for hypothermia, dehydration and frostbite in below-zero temperatures at 21,000 feet, which kept the death toll to eight, was detailed in the best-selling 1997 book "Into Thin Air," the 1998 IMAX film "Everest" and numerous TV and print interviews. It also led to Kamler's first book, "Doctor on Everest," published by Lyons Press in 2000.

The idea for the new book came from his lectures around the United States where "people were as interested in the medical problems as they were in the places I've gone. I got the idea that it would be a fascinating book to explain

what it's like to explore an unknown environment and explain what's going on inside the body when that happens."

So he wrote chapters on surviving in space, the jungle, being at sea, under the sea, and in the desert, where he describes the ordeal of a marathon runner lost in the Sahara who survived eight days without water.

Kamler found a shared lesson in the tales of endurance. "The survivors

are the people who in their civilized life can defer immediate gratification," he said. "They are disciplined people who do something because it's right rather than do it for the accolades."

Kamler, whose office is decorated with large photographs of one of his climbs on Everest, got the bug to explore places most others just dream

about when, at age 8, he spotted a book about the Himalayas on his father's bookshelf. His father, a lawyer, liked to travel, Kamler said, but neither his dad nor mother, a school secretary, was outdoorsy.

The book "opened up a world to me that I didn't know exist-

ed," he said. "I always liked outdoor stuff and I always liked the idea of exploring." So he started exploring the invisible world with a microscope. That fascination ultimately led him to microsurgery. And he began to explore the visible world by learning how to sail, canoe and scuba dive by the time he was in college.

Mountain climbing came when he

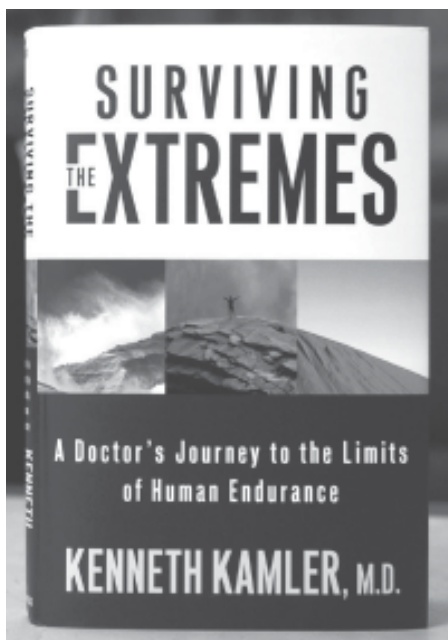
was a medical intern in his late 20s.

He went to a climbing school in New Hampshire and learned the ropes from ex-Green Beret Rob Blatherwick. A few months after returning from New Hampshire, Blatherwick, who had become a friend, was organizing a climb of Taquarhu, a 19,000-foot peak in the Andes of Peru, and invited Kamler as team doctor. On the drive to the mountain, they saw a truck filled with villagers tumble down a ravine, and Kamler spent 24 hours treating more than a dozen injured people.

The climb up Taquarhu was thrilling, he said, "but I found that treating the people was a higher summit. "After his medical and climbing exploits in Peru, he was invited to join the exclusive Explorers Club, a group of adventurers in New York, which opened the door to other adventures — such as reaching the summit of Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica.

Thanks to his new contacts, between 1992 and 1999, Kamler made six trips to Everest as team doctor on scientific expeditions organized by the National Geographic Society or the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Climbing is a burning need, Kamler says. "It's exhilarating. Everyone should have some goal in their lives that is almost but not quite unreachable. It brings out the best in you. It gives an equilibrium and a kind of harmony about life that I don't think you can get very easily any other way. That's the attraction, not necessarily getting to the top."





# ‘Jeopardy!’ champ breaks records

## Nomination for 13-year-old among Oscar surprises

**HOLLYWOOD**—This year’s Oscar nominations are as noteworthy for their surprise inclusions as for their omissions.

No one was more shocked than New Zealand actress Keisha Castle-Hughes, who at 13 is the youngest person ever nominated for best actress. Castle-Hughes, nominated for her performance in “Whale Rider,” was fast asleep in her Auckland home when her mother came rushing in at 3 a.m. local time to tell her the news.

But Castle-Hughes refused to get out of bed.

“I thought I was just dreaming,” she said, noting that she is “not a morning person.” By quarter to six, her mother put Alan Nierob and Nicole Perez, her Hollywood publicists, on the phone.

“I feel so overwhelmed—it’s like I’m in a big whirlwind and I’m going to wake up and it’s all going to be over,” she said. “It’s not every day that someone runs into your room and tells you are nominated for best actress.”

Castle-Hughes was plucked from her school one day for a rehearsal of the movie



Keisha Castle-Hughes as Paikea in Newmarket’s “Whale Rider.”

and to her surprise was chosen to play the determined Pai, a young girl born into tragedy who doggedly sets out to prove to her stubborn grandfather that young girls can be leaders.

She rehearsed intensely for months with the film’s director, Niki Caro, before filming. Castle-Hughes, who describes herself as a “girlie-girl,” even had to learn how to run like her character, who is a tomboy. And now that she’s been nominated, she said she is determined to become an actor.

On the other side of the surprise factor, several Oscar veterans did not get nominations. Jack Nicholson, Russell Crowe,

Tom Cruise, last year’s best supporting actor Chris Cooper and last year’s best actress winner Nicole Kidman all were denied even though the films they starred in received nominations in other categories.

Jennifer Connelly—who was touted on the covers of magazines as an Oscar shoo-in for her performance as a wounded soul in DreamWorks’ “House of Sand and Fog,” did not get nominated.

Two actresses named by critics’ groups as standouts this year—Hope Davis for “American Splendor” and Maria Bello for “The Cooler”—also were overlooked.

By TRACY L. SCOTT  
THE WASHINGTON POST

The answer: He set a new “Jeopardy!” record in 2004 by winning \$186,900 in an eight-day run.

The question: Who is 39-year-old Tom Walsh of Washington?

Walsh, a political freelance writer, is the first seven-time undefeated champion in the show’s history.

He suggests an asterisk follow that statement because he is one of the few who has been able to take advantage of the show’s new “Sky’s the Limit” policy that makes it possible for winners to return indefinitely.

Walsh, who appeared on the show eight times, said the new rule, implemented as part of the show’s 20th anniversary celebration, is one of the reasons he was able to set the new record.

“We’ll never know how much (previous contestants) would have racked up,” Walsh said.

The previous record for money won was \$149,000. That record was set earlier this year shortly after the five-day champion rule was abolished.

“We felt it would be more thrilling to remove the five-day rule and see how unstoppable these champions really are. This change will take the show’s energy to the next level and create a

continuing opportunity for historic firsts,” according to executive producer Harry Friedman.

Walsh said he doesn’t expect his record to stand long now that contestants have an opportunity to return perpetually, as long as they’re winning.

Walsh offered some advice for “Jeopardy!” hopefuls.

“I think the most important advice is not on how to win, but on how to make sure it’s a fun experience. You can control that. You can’t control if you’re going to win,” he said.

“It’s important to recognize that the odds are that you’re going to lose, but be determined to have a fun experience whether you win or lose.”

Walsh also recommends that contestants not disclose the events of what took place on the show before it airs. His shows were taped in October. Walsh was quiet for nearly three months.

“It was a complete surprise and exciting for my friends that tuned in,” he said.

In addition, Walsh suggests that hopefuls watch “Jeopardy!” regularly, which he had not done before he was on the show.

“There were some points at which having more experience watching the show would have come in handy,” said Walsh, who visited Web sites for tips on wagering.

“I would say I was a casual, occasional watcher. When I visited my parents, we’d watch it. My parents watch it religiously,” he said.

Walsh’s parents urged him to apply. Family members, including his father who auditioned for the show several years ago, were present at the last few tapings of the show.

Before being selected as a contestant for the shows, which aired in January, Walsh had auditioned for “Jeopardy!” in 2001. He passed the test, but never received a call.

In 2003, when he heard the show was testing in the Washington area, Walsh tried again.

“I tried to be a little more perky during the interview,” he said.

Walsh said he did not expect to be selected for the show and did not expect to win \$186,900; however, he plans to put the money to good use.

“I plan to give a lot of it away. “Right after I did the taping, I flew to Thailand to visit friends who work with Burmese refugees and others who have very hard lives. As a Christian and American, I feel a responsibility to put this money to work for people that don’t have access to much,” he said.

“It’s my desire to make these dollars go a long way.”

seman obit

# Judge says R. Kelly must avoid Jackson

By DON BABWIN  
AP WRITER

**CHICAGO (AP)**—R. Kelly won't be mingling with Michael Jackson during next month's Grammy festivities: A judge has ordered the R&B star, who is awaiting trial on child pornography charges, to stay away from the King of Pop, himself facing child molestation charges, when Kelly attends the awards.

The Chicago-based Kelly has produced two songs for Jackson: the 1995 hit "You Are Not Alone" and last fall's "One More Chance." Kelly is nominated for two Grammys at the Feb. 8 ceremony and had to get a judge's permission to attend the Los Angeles event; Jackson is not up

for any awards and there are no indications that he even plans to attend the ceremony.

Prosecutors and Kelly's lawyers said they never raised the issue of a meeting between Jackson and Kelly during a hearing this week about Kelly's travel. Cook County Circuit Judge Vincent Gaughan made the edict on his own, they said. The judge was at a funeral Wednesday and could not be reached for comment.

Kelly lawyer Edward Genson said Monday's ruling, first reported by the Chicago Sun-Times on Tuesday, was not a problem.

"What's the difference if someone makes an order not to see someone he didn't want to see in the first place?" Genson asked.



R. Kelly performs in this Dec. 10, 2003 file photo during the Billboard Music Awards at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas. AP

## Jackson accuser's dad is denied visits

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—The father of Michael Jackson's young accuser appeared on the verge of tears Wednesday after a judge denied his request to see his children.

Barred from contacting the boy and his brother and sister, the father had asked to visit his son because of rumors the boy is sick and because he hoped to determine if Jackson molested him.

Although he denied the request, Superior Court Judge Richard E. Denner scheduled a Feb. 24 hearing to hear any additional evidence showing why the father should be allowed to have contact with the boy.

Jackson has pleaded innocent to seven counts of performing lewd or lascivious acts on a child under 14 and two counts of administering an intoxicating agent, reportedly wine. He is free on \$3 million bail pending trial.

The father pleaded no contest to child cruelty in 2002 and spousal abuse in 2001 and was barred from seeing his children. The boy's mother filed for divorce in October 2001. The father's attorney, Russell Halpern, said he has since completed classes in parenting and anger management.

The Associated Press is not identifying the father to

avoid identifying Jackson's accuser.

The father has said that if rumors about the boy's health are true, then it is important his side of the family get back in touch to be available as potential organ donors.

William Dickerman, a former attorney for the family, told The Associated Press last week that the boy was ill. Jamie Masada, a friend of the family, said in November the boy's remaining kidney was failing, though he said last week his condition was improving.

Halpern said an attorney for the mother produced doctors' letters saying the boy was in

stable condition. It was unclear whether that meant the boy had been hospitalized.

The boy has lost a kidney to cancer surgery, but law enforcement officials suggested the boy is healthy in another letter Halpern said the mother's attorney had.

Her attorneys declined to comment.

The father declined interview requests.

"I appreciate your concern but I can't comment. It's really difficult," he said. Asked if there was anything he wanted to tell his family, he replied, "Just how much I miss them."

Kelly, already a Grammy winner, is nominated for best contemporary R&B album for his double-platinum album "Chocolate Factory" and best male R&B performance.

Kelly was arrested in June 2002 after a videotape surfaced that allegedly showed him having sex with an underage girl. He has denied the charges alleged in a 21-count indictment.

Jackson has pleaded innocent to seven counts of performing lewd or lascivious acts on a child under 14 and two counts of administering an intoxicating agent, reportedly wine. He was

arrested in November.

Kelly, who remains free on bond, has received Gaughan's permission to travel before. He has to be back in Chicago from his latest trip on Feb. 18.

WALLACE

## James Brown accused of shoving his wife

**AIKEN, S.C. (AP)**—Soul singer James Brown was arrested Wednesday after he allegedly pushed his wife to the floor during an argument, authorities said.

Brown, 70, was charged with criminal domestic violence and was to remain jailed until a bond hearing Thursday morning, Aiken County sheriff's spokesman Lt. Michael Frank said.

Investigators say Brown shoved his wife during an argument in a bedroom at the couple's home in Beech Island, 70 miles southwest of Columbia.

Tomi Rae Brown, 33, had scratches and bruises to her right arm and hip and was taken

to a hospital, Frank said.

James Brown's publicist Simone Smalls declined to comment Wednesday.

Brown is known as the Godfather of Soul for a multitude of hits, including "I Got You (I Feel Good)," "Sex Machine" and "Living in America." Last month he was honored at the Kennedy Center as "one of the most influential musicians of the past 50 years."

Brown served a 2 1/2-year prison term after a 1988 arrest on drug and assault charges and was convicted of a drug-related offense in 1998. He was granted a state pardon in May.



Soul singer James Brown, in this Aiken County Sheriff's Office photo, was arrested Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2004. AP



# Berry OK after accident on 'Catwoman' set

**VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP)**—Halle Berry was taken to a hospital after colliding with a piece of set equipment while filming a running scene for "Catwoman" but is now back at work,

production spokesman Joe Everett said.

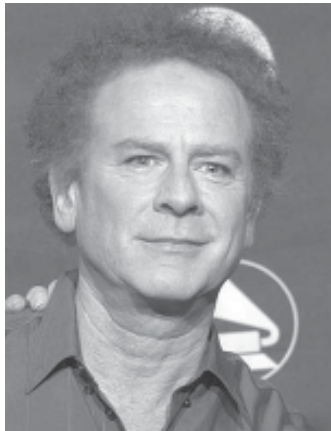
The accident was quite minor, Everett said Tuesday, denying reports that the Oscar-winning actress was hit in the head with a microphone boom

and spent six hours in a hospital waiting room.

"She had to maneuver past a piece of equipment, a set piece and she didn't quite run past it, but she's just fine," he said. "She was taken to hospital Saturday

night, treated and released and was at work again Monday morning."

Berry broke her arm last year while shooting "Gothica" in Montreal and injured her eye on the set of "Die Another Day."



Garfunkel

## Art Garfunkel to fight marijuana charge

**HURLEY, N.Y. (AP)**—Folk-rock legend Art Garfunkel apparently is contesting a marijuana possession charge he faces in upstate New York.

Settling the matter Wednesday could have been as easy as paying a \$100 fine, but instead a judge set a Feb. 11 hearing after Garfunkel's attorney Michael Federoff appeared in court.

Federoff declined to discuss the case and a call to a publicist for

Garfunkel was not immediately returned Wednesday night.

Garfunkel, 62, of Manhattan, was charged with marijuana possession Jan. 17 after state police stopped his limousine for speeding in Hurley, 55 miles southwest of Albany.

Police said a trooper smelled marijuana when he approached the limo and found 6 grams of marijuana in Garfunkel's jacket pocket. Garfunkel faces up to a

\$100 fine, unless he has had a criminal conviction in the past three years. Authorities won't say whether he has a prior record.

Garfunkel recently completed a U.S. concert tour with Paul Simon, their first in 20 years. Simon and Garfunkel produced a string of hits in the 1960s, including "The Sound of Silence," "Mrs. Robinson," "Old Friends" and "The 59th Street Bridge Song (Feelin' Groovy)."

## Court date set for Madonna, Ritchie case

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—A lawsuit alleging that Madonna and her husband, director Guy Ritchie, stole the idea for the 2002 film remake of "Swept Away" will go to court May 4.

In the lawsuit, self-described singer, songwriter, director and actor Vincent D'Onofrio alleges Madonna and Ritchie took his idea for a remake of the 1975 Italian comedy and then cut him out of the credits and compensation.

The movie, which Ritchie directed, stars Madonna as a wealthy woman stranded on a desert island with a sailor. It bombed at the box office and was panned by critics.

D'Onofrio sued Madonna, Ritchie and Sony Pictures in Superior Court in October 2002, claiming he pitched the idea to Madonna in April 1997 and had several meetings with her and Ritchie.

Attorneys for the couple have said D'Onofrio has no proof of a contract with the female singer or Sony.

'Rings' receives 11 Oscar nominations

D'Onofrio's attorney said he would seek \$10 million in damages.

D'Onofrio is not the actor of the same name who portrays Detective Bobby Goren on NBC's "Law & Order: Criminal Intent."



Madonna and director husband Guy Ritchie, arrive at the Royal Albert Hall for a movie premiere in London Monday, Nov. 18, 2002.

## Crystal happy about Murray's nomination

**SARASOTA, Fla. (AP)**—A month before returning as host of the Academy Awards, Billy Crystal said he was thrilled that his friend Bill Murray earned a best actor nomination.

"I'm so happy for him," Crystal said. "He's really stretched himself in the last three or four years."

Murray was nominated for playing a washed-up actor in Tokyo in "Lost in Translation." The role earned him a Golden

Globe Award on Sunday.

Crystal was in Sarasota for a screening of his daughter Lindsay's documentary "My Uncle Berns," about his charismatic uncle, Bernhardt Crystal. The film is scheduled to air on HBO this summer.

The 55-year-old comedian said he's eager to host the show again after a three-year break, but said he still gets nervous.

"It's a tough room," he said with a grin.

Crystal also smiled when asked whether he'll be dressed as a hobbit, a jockey or a sea captain in the style of some of the best-picture nominees, "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King," "Seabiscuit" and "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World."

"We've been working on possible ideas since November," he told the Sarasota Herald-Tribune. "It's tough, because the Oscars are a month earlier this year."

## House clutter may disguise problems that run deeper

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

**DEAR ABBY:** My husband has been working out of the country for almost a year. Since he's been gone, I have turned into a housekeeping slob. I have a demanding job where I pick up the slack for missing personnel. I am one of a few musicians at church on Sundays. In addition, I'm struggling with a chronic back problem. I'm overwhelmed.

Cleaning the house has taken a back seat to all the other things I do, and now it is full of clutter. It's out of control.

Most of the time I feel like I don't care. How can I get out of this slump? I feel guilty when I watch my neighbors taking care of their homes. Please help me get going.

NOT MOTIVATED IN ORANGE, CALIF.



*Dear Abby*

**DEAR NOT:** Has it occurred to you that you might be depressed by your husband's long absence? The first thing to do is schedule an appointment with your physician for a complete check-up and a frank talk. Once that's done, ask a friend or two if they'll help you with the house over a weekend. Treat them to dinner and a movie afterward. Of course, for the same amount of money, you could probably hire someone to help you, but enlisting the help of friends would be more fun. And from my perspective, contact with friends is what you need right now. Good luck.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** There is a husband and wife in our church who drive everyone crazy. We live in a small rural area and most of our congregation are simple, modest folk.

These people live in a neighboring town in a very pretentious, affluent neighborhood. They drive an expensive SUV and are extravagant in everything they do. Their children misbehave often, and the whole family acts like they're better than everyone else. They are all spoiled, lacking in discipline, and seem to have behavior or emotional problems. Despite their bravado, they don't realize that everybody can see through them.

Maybe if you remind these individuals that God can see them, whether they are in church or not, they'll know they aren't fooling anyone.

MISERABLE METHODIST IN NEW YORK

**DEAR MISERABLE METHODIST:** God can see you, too. And he has asked me to relay this message: "Happy are they who tend to their own gardens and waste not their time complaining about their neighbors' shortcomings."

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** For three years in high school, I was sexually harassed by a boy I'll call "Tim." When he graduated, I thought my troubles were over. They're not. Due to a disability, I will not be going away to college. Tim is not going away for the same reason. We will both be attending the same community college.

I have contacted the head of security at the college and will be speaking to him soon.

How do I keep Tim from destroying my dignity like he did in high school? I am terrified of him.

FEARFUL IN OHIO

**DEAR FEARFUL:** First of all, let's hope this young man has matured past the point where he would harass you. Neither of you are children anymore.

You are doing the right thing to take your concerns to the head of security. If that fails to resolve the problem, document any and all incidents and promptly report the harassment to the police department.

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

*Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)*



AP Actor Bill Murray is shown in a scene from Focus Features' "Lost in Translation" in this undated publicity photo.



Pastimes

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

TRAFFIC REPORTS

Solution: 6 letters

T K Y S U W E A R L Y N I A M  
A R L H T N E A V O I C E S  
C A O E I E I E A I S W E P Y  
C P E P T A R X T S A T G L A  
E L N W E A D A E I Y N O G D  
S L O W E R T R T C I O U P S  
S R I C A S P S N N P I D S S  
K M T Z K X A E R S D W E R C  
B R A K E C U A A E W N T U J  
L H M Z D Q W E C N T E E O A  
O L R A E S E C T I O N N T M  
C B O R D E R I W L T E I E M  
K R F T S R E V I R D I R D E  
B S N O I T I D N O C G E I D  
G N I N R O M A Y T E F A S F

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Access, Advice, Area, Block, Border, Brake, Broadcast, Cars, Cities, Clock, Conditions, Crew, Daily, Days, Detours, Drivers, Early, Easy, Exit, Express, Fire, Frequency, Guide, Hazard, Information, Interstate, Jammed, Lines, Loop, Main, Maze, Merge, Morning, Network, News, Park, Report, Safety, Section, Slower, Station, Stops, Toll, Voice, Waits, Warning, Wheel, Witness, Yield.  
Yesterday's Answer: Paper  
NOTE: Postage and handling charges have changed for The Collected Wonderword. Add \$3 for the first book ordered, \$1 more for each additional book. Volumes 17 and 18 are \$5.95 each, payable to Universal Press Syndicate. Send to WONDERWORD, 4502 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free, 1-800-255-6734, ext. 6613.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 To and — remark

4 Spelldown

7 Bear

12 Mason's field

13 Can. prov.

14 It's from the heart

15 B&B

16 If not

18 Society-page word

19 Snap

20 Microbe

22 Golfer Ernie

23 Confront

27 Summer-time quaff

29 Chicken

31 Teary

34 Napped leather

35 Symbol

37 Pompous sort

38 Subway, in London

39 Mel of Coopers-town

41 Vague

45 Hostess snacks

47 Bovine

48 Altered

52 Cartoon-ist's supply

53 Heat

54 Unfriendly

55 Ball-bearing item

56 A long time

57 Mardi Gras VIP

58 Couturier's monogram

DOWN

1 Hurl

2 Indian princess

3 Landlord, often

4 Nitwit

5 Main dish

6 Lucy's pal

7 Fir coat

8 Squabble

9 Swiss canton

10 "—

11 Dundee denial

17 Comfortable

21 Syrup flavor

23 It beats a straight

24 Brewery creation

25 Massachusetts cape

26 Ram's ma'am

28 Go green?

30 Curvaceous character?

31 Sopping

32 Flightless bird

33 Recede

36 Othello was one

37 Promptly

40 "... — finest hour"

42 Friendship

43 They have all the time in the world

44 Hayseed

45 Towel designation

46 Charon's river

48 Rotation duration

49 Infuriation

50 Part of the Dept. of HHS

51 In favor of

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	S	H		B	A	C	H		S	A	G	A
C	R	O		A	L	O	E		E	B	O	N
H	O	R	N	B	I	L	L		N	E	O	N
		N	I	B		A	L	F	A	L	F	A
T	O	P	P	L	E		O	U	T			
A	M	I		E	L			R	O	B	E	S
C	A	P	S		M	O	E		R	U	D	E
T	R	E	A	T		U	L	T		L	I	E
				D	E	B		F	A	B	L	E
T	O	D	D	L	E	R		R	A	H		
O	R	A	L		L	O	N	G	H	O	R	N
O	G	R	E		O	B	O	E		R	O	B
L	Y	E	S		W	O	N	T		N	Y	C

Yesterday's answer 1-30

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14				
15				16				17				
18				19								
20			21		22				23	24	25	26
			27	28				29	30			
31	32	33						34				
35					36			37				
38					39	40			41	42	43	44
				45				46		47		
48	49	50	51							52		
53						54				55		
56						57				58		

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

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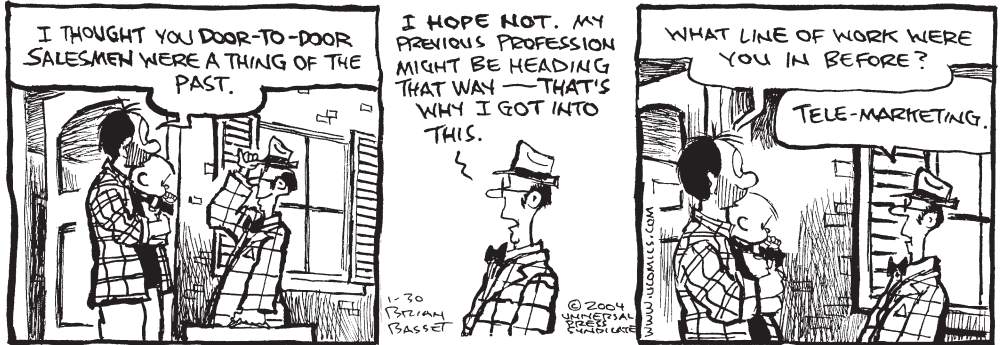
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Watterson



Adam@home

By Brian Basset



Garfield®

by Jim Davis



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy





# Pastimes



NBA STANDINGS					
EASTERN CONFERENCE					
Atlantic Division					
	W	L	Pct	G	
New Jersey	39	25	.609	-	
Philadelphia	37	26	.587	1 1/2	
Boston	37	27	.578	2	
Orlando	33	33	.500	7	
Washington	31	33	.484	8	
New York	28	36	.438	11	
Miami	21	43	.328	18	
Central Division					
Detroit	40	23	.635	-	
Indiana	38	27	.585	3	
New Orleans	37	29	.561	4 1/2	
Milwaukee	32	33	.492	9	
Atlanta	26	39	.400	15	
Chicago	23	43	.348	18 1/2	
Toronto	20	42	.323	19 1/2	
Cleveland	11	53	.172	29 1/2	
WESTERN CONFERENCE					
Midwest Division					
Dallas	48	15	.762	-	
San Antonio	45	18	.714	3	
Minnesota	42	25	.627	8	
Utah	37	27	.578	11 1/2	
Houston	33	30	.524	15	
Memphis	23	41	.359	25 1/2	
Denver	14	51	.215	35	
Pacific Division					
Sacramento	45	19	.703	-	
Portland	42	22	.656	3	
L.A. Lakers	35	28	.556	9 1/2	
Phoenix	33	30	.524	11 1/2	
Golden State	31	33	.484	14	
Seattle	28	34	.452	16	
L.A. Clippers	20	44	.313	25	

NBA STANDINGS		
EASTERN CONFERENCE		
Atlantic Division		
Team	W	L
New Jersey	31	14
Boston	26	19
Philadelphia	24	22
Orlando	24	23
Washington	22	24
New York	19	25
Miami	16	29
Central Division		
Indiana	33	13
Detroit	29	15
New Orleans	24	22
Milwaukee	22	22
Chicago	17	28
Atlanta	17	29
Toronto	11	34
Cleveland	9	37
WESTERN CONFERENCE		
Midwest Division		
Dallas	35	9
San Antonio	29	16
Minnesota	27	18
Utah	27	18
Houston	24	20
Memphis	13	31
Denver	10	35
Pacific Division		
Sacramento	32	14
Portland	28	16
Phoenix	26	21
L.A. Lakers	20	23
Seattle	20	23
Golden State	20	24
L.A. Clippers	17	28

NBA STANDINGS		
EASTERN CONFERENCE		
Atlantic Division		
Orlando	2	0
New Jersey	1	0
Philadelphia	1	1
Boston	0	1
Miami	0	1
New York	0	1
Washington	0	1
Central Division		
Chicago	1	0
Detroit	1	0
Indiana	1	0
Toronto	1	0
New Orleans	0	0
Atlanta	0	1
Cleveland	0	1
Milwaukee	0	1
WESTERN CONFERENCE		
Midwest Division		
Dallas	1	0
Minnesota	1	0
San Antonio	1	0
Utah	0	0
Denver	0	1
Houston	0	1
Memphis	0	1
Pacific Division		
Sacramento	1	0
Portland	1	0
Golden State	0	0
L.A. Clippers	0	0
Phoenix	0	0
Seattle	0	0
L.A. Lakers	0	2
Wednesday's Games		
Chicago 99, Boston 96		
Indiana 91, Houston 82		
Toronto 74, Washington 68		
Philadelphia 95, Milwaukee 93		
Orlando 100, Miami 86		
New Jersey 105, Atlanta 94		
Dallas 119, Memphis 108		
Minnesota 83, Denver 77		
Detroit 86, New York 77		
Portland 102, L.A. Lakers 90		

Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	T
Giants	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	-	3	
Hustlers	1	0	1	4	2	0	0	5	-	13









**SPORTS BRIEFS**



**Spurs defeat Mavericks, 111-104**

Tony Parker scored a career-high 32 points, including seven free throws in the final minute, to lead the San Antonio Spurs to a 111-104 win over the division rival Dallas Mavericks on Wednesday night.

48

Saipan Tribune  
**Sports**

**Yearend RGA champion tourney tomorrow**

The Refaluwasch Golf Association will hold their yearend Club Champion Tournament tomorrow, December 14, at the Lao Lao West golf course.

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